SPORTS / A23

Miami nips
Dallas in OT
as Wade shines

ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1

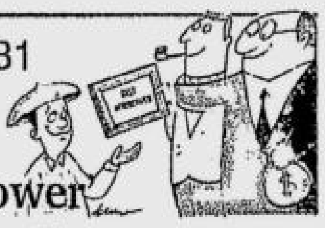
Censors reprimand
3 TV channels
for 'lewd' footage

ACROSS / A13

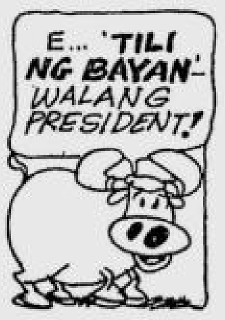
Bulusan evacuation
starts; permanent
danger zone widened

BUSINESS / B1

RP bags
'best borrower'
award from Euromoney



Group wants Charter change to junk House



By Norman Bordadora

TURNING THE TABLES ON those seeking to abolish the Senate through Charter change, a group calling itself Tugon ng Bayan is pushing for a unicameral legislature that would dissolve

GROUP/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Tuesday, June 20, 2006 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 192 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Launching of private impeachment bid reset

By TJ Burgonio and Philip C. Tubeza

OPPOSITION SENATORS SEE BRIGHTER prospects with the new impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo being prepared by apolitical but credible civic and religious leaders.

However, this early a snafu has begun to emerge in the civilian effort to unseat Ms Arroyo.

LAUNCHING/ A4

3 Army battalions join anti-NPA drive

Elite Navy commando unit thrown into battle

**By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
and Marlon Ramos**
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Dona Pazzibugan

WHILE MALACAÑANG and its advisers are debating timetables, the military is wasting no time trying to get the job done.

Three Army battalions from war-scarred Mindanao yesterday arrived at Camp Nakar in Lucena City for deployment to areas in Luzon where they will battle, not Islamic rebels, but guerrillas of the communist New People's Army.

Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay Jr., Southern Luzon Command chief, sounded the battle trumpet when he welcomed the Mindanao warriors to his camp.

"Let us show how we are all eager to crush the enemy in two years as ordered by President Macapagal-Arroyo. And we will do it," Cabuay told the soldiers.

"This insurgency war has been too long. So many lives have been lost and injured. It affects our economy. We have to end all this for the sake of the country and our people."

At Sangley Point in nearby Cavite, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga vowed to accomplish the mission when he attended the graduation ceremonies for 21 members of the Navy SEALS, an elite sea-air-land unit whose specialty is unconventional warfare.

The unit, trained in planting explosives and staging commando raids, is also to be thrown into the battle with the NPA.

"The President has given us a mission. We will try to accomplish that during the time frame," Senga told reporters.

3 ARMY/ A8

BATTLE READY. A member of the Philippine Navy SEALS fires an M-60 machinegun during a counterinsurgency training exercise held at Sangley Point in Cavite City.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Left groups in orders of battle, say papers

By Norman Bordadora

INTELLIGENCE UNITS OF THE Armed Forces have been monitoring and even preparing orders of battle on sectoral groups alleged to be fronts of the communist underground, according to documents submitted by a militant group to the Commission on Human Rights.

The documents, which the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas claimed came from a source inside Camp Aguinaldo, generally showed a shift in intelligence gathering techniques anchored on "knowing the enemy."

The KMP's disclosure of the documents followed President Macapagal-Arroyo's call on the military and the national police to defeat the insurgency at least within her term, which ends in 2010.

The disclosure also came in the wake of an upsurge in the killing of leftwing militants by unidentified men whom leftwing groups said belonged to paramilitary groups.

One document was a letter supposedly signed by then AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence Tirso Danga ordering the institution of "target research" on sectoral groups and the roles they play in "actively advancing the revolutionary struggle of the Left."

The groups included those in the ranks of labor and the peas-

LEFT/ A9

Negotiated PNP deals defended

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police top brass yesterday defended the decision to dispense with a public bidding in the acquisition of some P322 million worth of patrol cars, handguns and motorcycles, saying it was advantageous to the government.

The police even saved roughly P56 million from these purchases, top PNP officials said.

Also coming to the PNP's defense, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said that among the reasons officials opted for a "negotiated procurement" or "direct contracting" was standardization.

Puno said a public bidding might not help in the standard-

NEGOTIATED/ A4

LYN RILLON

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao inspect newly acquired Brazilian-made guns for policemen.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

An era of declining support for uprooted

By Fernando del Mundo

SPECIAL REPORT

WHEN BENIGNO AQUINO REnounced in 1980 an agreement with the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, declaring that "a pact with the devil is no pact at all," he became a refugee in the United States.

The foremost political prisoner of the martial law regime, Aquino had been allowed to undergo heart surgery in Boston. He had promised to return soon after that, but decided to remain there.

Three years later, Aquino was assassinated on his return to Manila to mobilize the fractured political opposition. His killing galvanized a protest movement that led to the ouster of Marcos and the recovery of democracy that had been lost upon the declaration of martial law in 1972.

Few in the Philippines were aware of Aquino's status as a refugee, alongside that of his wife Corazon, who was later installed as President following the departure of the dictator. There's little awareness of asylum instruments in the country.

The list of refugees—defined in the 1951 Geneva convention as people who had crossed international boundaries to flee a "well-founded fear of persecution"—is long.

They include Jesus, whose family escaped the wrath of King Herod in Israel, and the prophet

AN ERA/ A6

'Nicole' forced out of bar, witness told

**By Volt Contreras
and Tarra V. Quismundo**

A FEW HOURS AFTER IT HAPPENED, Nicole told an investigator that American servicemen had forced her out of a nightclub and allegedly raped her in a moving van.

Ramon Paje, the 12th witness for the prosecution, testified that Nicole, when interviewed after receiving medical attention six hours after her alleged rape, claimed that the accused US Marines took her out of a popular nightspot "against her will" before carrying out the crime in a Starex van.

Paje said the 22-year-old Filipino complainant in the Subic rape case remembered being "kissed and her private parts touched (*hinipuan*)," her pants and underwear being "pulled down," before being "sexually abused (*pinagsamantalahan*)."

That Nicole herself claimed that she was forcibly brought out of Neptune Bar inside the Subic Freeport was one version of the incident never before presented in the trial at the Makati Regional Trial Court's Branch 139.

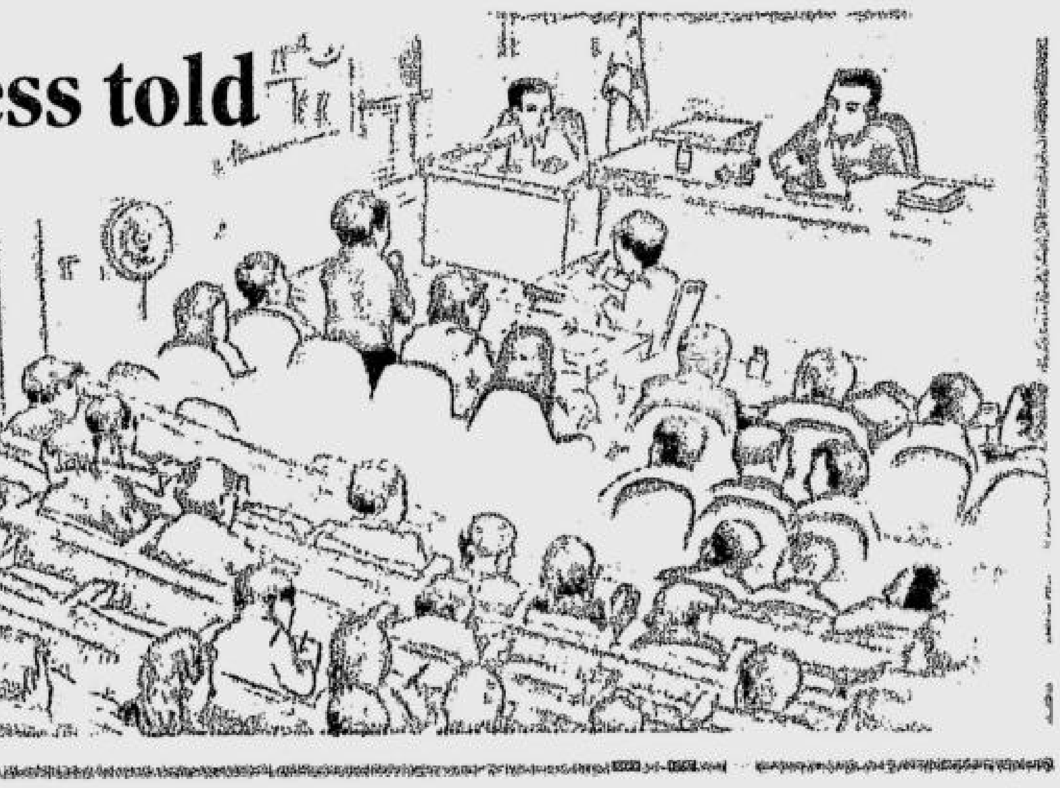
A previous witness, Neptune security guard Gerald Muyot, recalled seeing an apparently "unconscious" Nicole being carried piggyback by accused Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith from the bar entrance to the van. Muyot then said he also heard Smith telling him, "She's with me. We're gonna go now."

Paje, a member of the Subic Bay

'NICOLE'/ A4

A WITNESS testifies during the hearing of the Subic rape case against four American Marines in this artist's sketch of yesterday's courtroom scene.

STEPH BRAVO



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2006

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Southern Luzon, the whole of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over the Bicol region. The rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY KATE V. PEDROSO PDI RESEARCH/06/19/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FRONT PAGE

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Palace links Gringo to blasts

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Luige A. del Puerto

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY LINKED THE GROUP OF ex-Sen. and ex-coup plotter Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan to the spate of bombings that have rocked Metro Manila recently.

In a press briefing at the Presidential Security Group office in Malacañang, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said the police were looking into the possible involvement of Honasan and his aides in the bombings.

Puno said that while police investigations of the bombings had yet to be completed, all evidence collected pointed to the group of Honasan.

"They (the bombers) have claimed to be the group of 'Tabak' but this group has the same footprints as previous groups identified with this same group of people (Honasan and his aides). So the investigation is proceeding in this direction," Puno said.

Puno made the disclosure after President Macapagal-Arroyo let the cat out of the bag as she commented on the arrest on Saturday of two aides of Honasan, retired Colonels Virgilio Briones and Romeo Lazo.

"Isn't (their arrest) related to the bombings?" the President asked Puno during the briefing.

Three explosions that caused no injuries rocked the metro since early June. The first blast occurred June 6 at the Grepalife building in Makati City, another at Philcoa in Quezon City on June 11 and the third at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City on June 13.

Police have ruled them out as terrorist bombings—which they said usually targeted crowded places and used powerful explosives to inflict maximum damage—and surmised they were meant to "discredit and embarrass" the police and the Arroyo administration.

Puno told the President that the police had stepped up the hunt for Honasan and three of his aides still at large—retired Col. Felix Turingan, George Duldulao and Lina Reyes.

Honasan and his aides are facing rebellion charges for their alleged participation in the failed Oakwood mutiny of July 2003.

"With the arrest of the two retired colonels last week, we are hopeful that our operations will have positive results," Puno said.

"We would like to reduce the climate of adversity hanging between the uniformed services and these elements. We have assured the public that the police are in full control of the situation, that they (Honasan and his aides) cannot hide forever," Puno said.

Puno also renewed his appeal to Honasan and his aides to "surrender peacefully because we believe that going through the judicial process is the best way to resolve their differences with the government in terms of how to address public problems."

Puno amplified on his theme at Camp Crame shortly after presenting to the media the two alleged coup plotters Briones and Lazo who were arrested over the weekend.

He described the bombings in Metro Manila as "mere irritants" in a normal society.

"From the national security perspective, there is no more danger of any overthrow or coup or anything of that sort," Puno declared. "If you are talking about threats, there is none anymore."

He said efforts to undermine the administration would continue but maintained that no group at this time had the capability to "mount a serious threat" to the government.

"It is only a matter of time (before) we will be able to bring in everyone that has (an) outstanding warrant," Puno said, referring to Honasan and his aides.

RETIRED Colonels Virgilio Briones and Romeo Lazo await their presentation to the media yesterday at Camp Crame after they were arrested last Saturday on charges of rebellion in connection with the 2003 Oakwood mutiny. They will also be investigated for possible links to erstwhile senator and suspected coup plotter Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan. JOAN BONDOC

Journalists, village chief killed

COTABATO CITY—GUNMEN SHOT dead a husband and wife who were involved in left-wing politics and journalism on Monday in the latest attack on activists in the southern Philippines, a police official said.

Hooded men on motorcycles gunned down George Vigo, 40, and his wife Macel, 39, as they returned home in Kidapawan City, according to police chief Supt. Danny Reyes.

The gunmen then stopped and shot the fallen couple in the head to make sure they were dead before fleeing, said Reyes.

George Vigo was a freelance journalist while his wife was an aide to Rep. Lala Talino Santos and was a host of a weekly radio show.

Both had been affiliated with leftist groups in the past and George Vigo was a member of an international nongovernmental organization called Community and Family Services Inc. which helps children displaced by armed conflicts.

There were no immediate suspects and it was unclear what had triggered the hit. Reyes said no reports of any threats had been made against the couple.

In Luzon, as if to belie the government's all-out war against the communists, suspected New People's Army guerrillas shot and killed on Sunday a village chief who was described as very active in the peace campaign of the government.

The attackers on a motorcycle fired four successive shots at Eugene Estes, 59, in front of his wife in Barangay San Isidro in Lupao, Nueva Ecija. Estes died while undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

Supt. Peter Guibong, chief of the 308th police mobile group, said Estes was looking after his granddaughter in front of his house when three men attacked him. *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk, with Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; AFP*

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ISUZU 10W Transit Mixer
1 of 95 Closed Vans
Forward NKR Alum. Closed Van, Canvass Top, Long Body
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GMA releases P1B, this time vs graft

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AFTER COMMUNIST INSURGENTS, PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is shelling out another P1 billion to fight corrupt government officials and cleanse the graft-ridden bureaucracy in two years.

"I (have instructed the allocation) of a counterpart P1 billion for an all-out war against graft and corruption with the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission at the helm of executive efforts [in cooperation] with the constitutionally independent Ombudsman," said the President in a speech during a command conference on the Millennium Challenge Account in Malacañang.

The President said the allocation was the local counterpart to the $20.685-million grant that Washington gave the country recently under the Millennium Challenge Account, an initiative of President George W. Bush to reward developing countries for their good governance and to encourage them to do better.

The now roughly P2 billion anticorruption war chest, however, is just a sliver of the over P100 billion that is estimated the government loses every year due to corruption, according to the United Nations.

"Growing the economy, fighting terror, getting rid of graft and corruption—all these goals will travel on parallel and related paths as we consolidate the nation," said the President just a few days after announcing her allocation of P1 billion for an all-out war to crush the communist insurgency.

The President said the anticorruption fund would be used to step up the drive against tax cheats and smugglers of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs; launch high-impact anti-illegal drug operations by the Philippine National Police and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, and bankroll a value reorientation and moral recovery program through the Presidential Council on Values Formation in tandem with the religious sector, Department of Education, Commission for Higher Education and allied nongovernmental organizations.

The President said the fund would boost the Ombudsman's budget to hire more investigators and prosecutors.

"Part of the US funding will be used to attract more local investigators by providing them with just compensation under an employment contract with well-defined performance indicators," the President said.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said the PDEA was included in the anticorruption drive "in the belief that the drug trade flourishes because of grease money for protection."

The President said another key objective of the anticorruption drive was to boost the collection of two of the most graft ridden agencies in the country—the BIR and BOC.

"The project will develop an effective mechanism for gathering and validating tax collection data and invest in information technology, surveillance tools and a customs tracking systems so investigations are more thorough," said the President.

Chinese fishing boat yields 100 dead turtles

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD FOUND 100 dead sea turtles in a Chinese fishing vessel stopped by operatives off Palawan on Saturday for allegedly poaching in Philippine waters.

The PCG arrested the ship's eight crew members, whose names were not made available to the press.

The country's fisheries code specifies that sea turtles, which are considered endangered species, should not be caught or traded.

The Philippines is also a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), an international agreement between governments which prohibits the international trade in sea turtles.

According to the PCG report, the wooden-hulled Chinese vessel was caught 33 nautical miles southeast of Mangsee Island in Palawan on Saturday afternoon. It was spotted by a PCG-manned monitoring control and surveillance vessel of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources which routinely checks for illegal fishing and poaching.

Authorities sounded the alarm and fired warning shots at the Chinese vessel which, instead of stopping, tried to escape and sail toward Malaysia. After a brief chase, Coast Guard operatives, led by Capt. George Ursabia caught up with the vessel, the PCG report said.

Aside from 100 dead sea turtles, the PCG also found two live sharks on the ship.

PCG spokesperson Lt. Commander Joseph Coyme said that based on initial investigation, the fishing vessel had come from Hainan, China, as shown by documents found on board.

Coyme also said the fishing vessel, its crew and the confiscated dead sea turtles were expected to be brought to Puerto Princesa, Palawan, where they would be investigated for violating the country's fisheries laws.

According to the PCG, there are two known marine turtle sanctuaries off Baguan and San Miguel Islands in Tawi-Tawi. However, the turtles in the areas are believed to be threatened by poachers who sail near the Philippine-Malaysia border.

Gov't open to talks with Luisita owners on land distribution

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT IS OPEN TO exploratory talks with Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), which manages the 4,915-ha sugar estate whose distribution to its tenants was halted by a temporary restraining order issued by the Supreme Court last week.

An official of the Department of Agrarian Reform said the government would welcome any options to be presented by the landowner as long as this was in accordance with the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law.

"If they negotiate with us according to the agrarian reform law, we're willing to do exploratory talks on the possibility of them giving up the land, but not sparing it (from CARP coverage)," said Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Narciso Nieto yesterday.

Nieto, however, said the DAR would not initiate any backdoor negotiations with HLI or any members of the Cojuangco family, owners of Hacienda Luisita, because this might put political color in the effort, former President Cory Aquino being a member of the family.

"We don't want it to look like the President [Macapagal-Arroyo] is talking with them. We don't want to be accused of putting political color to this," said Nieto.

The influential Aquino withdrew her support from President Arroyo in July last year and called on her to step down amid allegations she had cheated in the 2004 elections.

Three months later, the DAR recommended the revocation of the stock distribution option (SDO) at Luisita, acting on a complaint filed by Luisita farm workers in 2003. The DAR maintained that its decision had nothing to do with the political situation in the country.

The government had planned to distribute the certificates of land ownership award covering the first 1,000 hectares of Luisita to its farm workers this month in celebration of the 18th CARP anniversary, but the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on the SDO cancellation and land distribution.

Nieto said it was unlikely there would be a distribution of CLOAs this month because of the TRO.

"They did not win; it's just a TRO. Anyway we are done with the documentation. The claims folder has been submitted to Land Bank," he said.

Workers set to take new labor chief's measure

ARTURO BRION HAS YET TO take his seat as the new labor secretary and already the militant labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno is telling him how to do his work.

KMU spokesperson Presto Suyat said Brion should know his priorities and, as incoming labor secretary, it is his job to introduce himself to the workers and make his plans for the department known to them.

"Brion's first order of the day is to meet with workers and labor leaders and to know the sector's situation, grievances and demands to the department."

Suyat said that Brion should meet with laborers before he touches base with employers and business groups. "After all, he will be heading the Department of Labor and Employment for the next four years, and the Dole is supposed to protect the interests and advance the conditions of the Filipino work force."

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Saturday named Brion the new secretary of labor, replacing Patricia Sto. Tomas who is leaving for the Development Bank of the Philippines.

Brion, who used to be a labor undersecretary, will formally take over the post on July 3.

According to Suyat, the KMU wants to hear from Brion what his plans for the workers will be and his position on the P125 across-the-board wage hike bill.

He also said the group wanted to inform Brion of the leftist group's agenda and its stand on issues.

"We will present to him the agenda and demands of the labor sector, including our urgent demand for economic relief, among other issues, and the massive violation of labor standards, labor 'contractualization' occupational health and safety issues, repression of trade unions, criminalization of labor disputes and the killing of labor leaders and unionists," he said.

Leila B. Salaverria

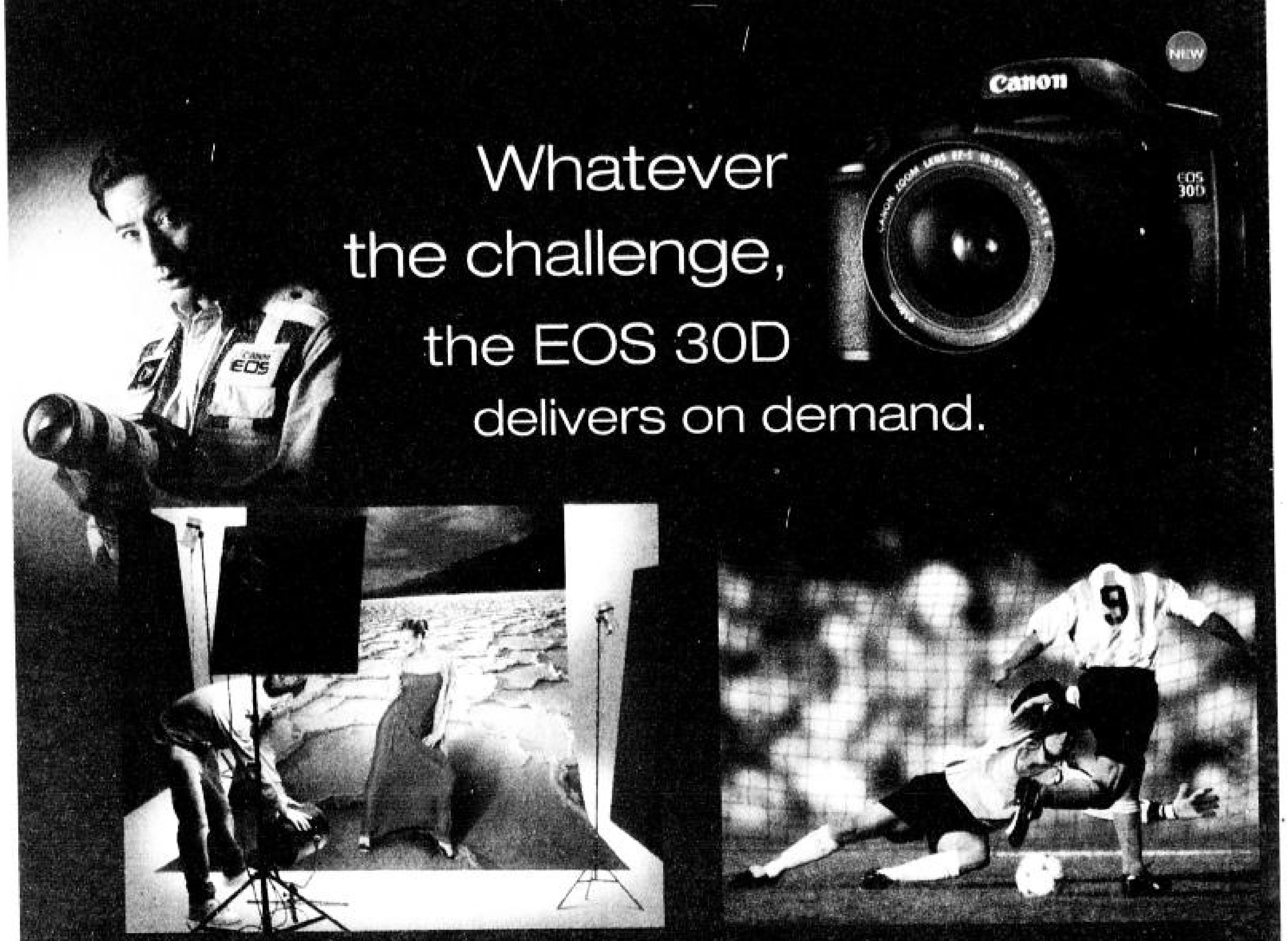
2nd US hospital ship here

A SECOND UNITED States Navy ship in a month headed to the southern Philippines loaded with humanitarian supplies and school books on a mission to improve the image of America and neutralize the support for Muslim militants, officials said Monday.

The high-speed vessel Joint Venture, a leased commercial super ferry, stopped in Manila on Monday before continuing to Jolo and other parts of Mindanao with hospital beds, medical supplies and school books, the US Embassy said in a statement.

The Hawaii-based wave-piercing catamaran will spend several months in the Philippines. It arrived after the Navy hospital ship, USNS Mercy completed its monthlong deployment in the southern Philippines, where it provided free medical treatment to local residents.

"This mission reflects...the two nations' continued commitment to work together to assist people in need," the embassy said in the statement. *AP*



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‘Nicole’ forced out . . .

From page A1

Metropolitan Authority’s Intelligence and Investigation Office, said SBMA patrollers brought Nicole to the IIO at around 12:35 a.m. of Nov. 2, but that he only managed to get her formal statement at around 6 a.m.

Testifying in Filipino, Paje said he first tried to talk to her, albeit unsuccessfully, when she arrived at the IIO looking “weary and reeking of liquor (*lupaypay at amoy alak*).”

Minutes after attending to other matters, Paje approached Nicole a second time, but she still would not speak. He then asked two patrollers to take her to the SBMA’s health and welfare office for initial treatment and then to the James Gordon Hospital in Olongapo City for a medico-legal examination.

Paje said he later learned from one of Nicole’s escorts that, before proceeding to the hospital, she asked that they pass by Neptune “to look for the Americans who took her out.”

‘It hurts’

He finally got some words out of Nicole when she returned from the hospital.

“I asked what happened to her,” the witness said. “The answer was that she was brought out [of the bar] against her will and she was loaded into the van, and then she was kissed, her private parts touched, her undergarments pulled down, and then she was sexually abused.”

Her body and genitals also ached, Paje recalled Nicole as saying.

“That’s all that I managed to ask her because she said she was uncomfortable with a male investigator and she preferred one who was female,” Paje said during his direct examination conducted by Prosecutor Hazel Valdez.

The prosecution panel is expected to present two new American witnesses today—Bruce Warshawsky, the fifth agent of the US Naval Criminal Investigative Service to be called to the stand, and US serviceman Christopher Mills.

But was Nicole “hardly intoxicated” or “*lasing na lasing* (heavily drunk)?”

Lawyers of the four US Marines used the two conflicting descriptions found in an initial report of Subic investigators to attack the prosecution’s claim that the complainant was too drunk to have consented to sex.

Paje had used the phrase “hardly intoxicated” to describe the complainant in his spot report, an incident brief made about the alleged rape.

During the cross-examination of IIO chief Paquito Torres, Paje’s superior, defense lawyers tackled the mistranslation left uncorrected in his investigator’s report.

Torres had explained that when Paje wrote “hardly intoxicated” in his spot report, Paje actually meant *lasing na lasing*, obviously the complete opposite of what he intended to say.

“Didn’t you correct ‘hardly intoxicated’ in [Paje’s] report? You noted the same report,” asked Francisco Rodrigo, counsel for accused S/Sgt. Chad Carpentier.

“I actually reprimanded him … [But] I cannot dictate on him because he was the officer on [the] case,” answered Torres.

Drunk or very drunk?

The reason behind the missed correction finally surfaced when Jose Justiniano, lawyer for accused Lance Cpl. Keith Silkwood, asked how Torres understood the phrase “hardly intoxicated.”

“*Lasing na lasing po* (heavily drunk),” said the investigator, who had been on the job for 14 years.

Torres had the same reply to reporters when asked what the English phrase meant in Filipino: “*Yun nga, lasing na lasing* (That’s it, heavily drunk).”

He added: “I cannot change that. That was what the investigator told me … the way he interpreted it.”

Justiniano, however, doubted Torres’ testimony, saying Paje used the term “hardly intoxicated” at least three times and, thus, must have meant it in every sense.

“Why wasn’t it corrected? What we see there is “hardly drunk” in its literal meaning—which is that she [complainant] was just “*nakainom lang* (just had a little drink)” in Filipino, [and] not really heavily drunk,” said Justiniano.

For the defense panel, the mistranslation could make their defense for Carpentier, Silkwood, and his fellow Lance Corporals Dominic Duplantis and Smith.

The complainant had alleged that Smith raped her while she was dead drunk in the back of the Starex van, as his comrades cheered him on.

According to witnesses, Nicole was later dumped at a parking lot at Subic’s Alava Pier, a short walk from where the servicemen’s ship, USS Essex, was docked.

“That’s a big difference because they [prosecution] said she [complainant] was too drunk to have given consent [to sex]. But if you just had a few drinks, you would still know what is happening around you,” Justiniano said.

At the start of the trial, the prosecution presented two security guards of Neptune Bar who described Nicole as barely conscious as she hung out at the bar, where she and accused Smith allegedly met.

Tomas Corpuz Jr. and Muyot, both on duty at the bar on the night of the incident, had testified that Nicole was wasted and wobbled in the function room. She was later carried piggyback by Smith to the van.

Voluntary or coerced?

Smith’s lawyer Benjamin Formoso questioned how Torres had taken the sworn statement of Timoteo Soriano Jr., driver of the Starex van at the time of the incident. Soriano alleged that Torres had coerced him into signing a statement saying that he had witnessed a gang rape.

“As an investigator for many years now, do you know the necessity of counsel when undertaking custodial investigation? Do you know of the provisions of the Constitution and of a special law about custodial investigation? Was there a waiver for Soriano indicating that he was waiving his right to a lawyer? You never barred him from leaving [your office]?” Formoso spat out one question after another.

“It was a voluntary statement … He was free to leave anytime. After he signed the statement, he just left,” Torres said.

Earlier, under Rodrigo’s cross-examination, Torres said: “I never treated him [Soriano] as a suspect because he was cooperative.”

‘I pity him’

As Formoso pursued his line of questioning, Judge Benjamin Pozon intervened and asked what the lawyer was driving at.

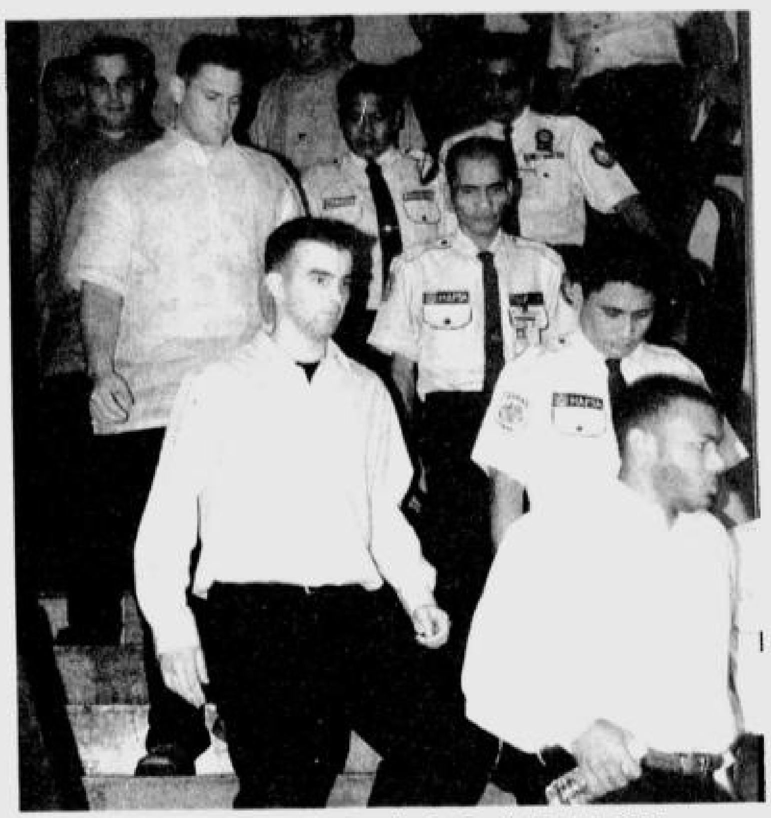
“I am trying to show, Your Honor, that Soriano’s [first] statement is inadmissible as evidence,” Formoso answered.

A visibly irked Pozon said: “You will argue that point with the witness? Let the court decide on that.”

Soriano had recanted his earlier statement taken down by Torres, saying he was forced to sign it under threat of being included in the case.

The driver also alleged that Torres punched him twice in the back to make him sign the statement. In his recantation, Soriano said he never witnessed the rape as he was driving the van around Subic on the night of the incident.

Confronted with Soriano’s allegations against him, Torres told defense lawyers: “I am not affected. I pity that person.”



AMERICAN Marines Dominic Duplantis, Daniel Smith, Keith Silkwood and Chad Carpentier, who have been accused of rape by a 22-year-old Filipino woman, leave the courtroom after a hearing of the case. RYAN LIM

SC asked to rule on US custody provision of VFA

By Armand N. Nocum

NICOLE, THE 22-YEAR-OLD who cried rape in the hands of four US Marines seven months ago, has asked the Supreme Court to declare unconstitutional two provisions in the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), namely, the condition allowing the US to have custody of the accused, and the one-year cap on the holding of a trial.

But Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez warned that the move could affect the “running of the period” provided for by the VFA and could delay the resolution of the case for up to 10 years.

In a petition filed by the rape victim through her lawyer Evalyn Ursua, the prosecution asked the court to set aside the May 5, 2006 ruling of Presiding Judge Benjamin Pozon of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 139, denying their petition to declare unconstitutional the provisions contained in Article 5, Paragraph 6 of the VFA.

“For the trial court to exercise effective jurisdiction over the criminal case, it must have custody over the person of the accused,” Ursua said.

‘Alias warrant’

She also asked the court to issue an “alias warrant” for the arrest of the accused, Lance Corporals Daniel Smith, Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis and S/Sgt. Chad Carpentier who are accused of raping Nicole on Nov. 1, 2005 at the Subic Bay Freeport.

Article 5, Paragraph 6 of the VFA states: “The custody of any United States personnel over whom the Philippines is to exercise jurisdiction shall immediately reside with United States military authorities, if they so request, from the commission of the offense until completion of all judicial proceedings.”

It adds: “In extraordinary cases, the Philippine government shall present its position to the United States government regarding custody, which the United States government shall take into full account.”

The provision also states that “in the event Philippine judicial proceedings are not completed within one year, the United States shall be relieved of any obligations under this paragraph.”

According to the VFA, “the one-year period will not include the time necessary to appeal … and any time during which scheduled trial procedures are delayed because United States authorities, after timely notification by Philippine authorities to arrange for the presence of the accused, fail to do so.”

Equal protection

Ursua said the provision violated her client’s right to equal protection of the laws, being the victim in the case.

It “infringes [on the] petitioner’s right to the equal protection of the laws when it prescribes a different rule for the arrest and custody of US military personnel charged with the commission of an offense cognizable by the Philippine courts. This places those US military personnel in a privileged position as compared to Filipino citizens similarly situated, who must be governed by our Rules of Criminal Procedure,” she said.

Ursua urged the high tribunal to rule that the one-year prescription period should start from the date of arraignment.

Pozon earlier ruled that the countdown on the case should start on Dec. 27, 2005, when it was raffled to the sala of Olongapo RTC Branch 73 Judge Renato Dilag.

It started the moment the “judicial proceeding commenced,” he said in his ruling.

Gonzalez warned that the filing of the petition might be fatal to the prosecution lawyers who only have one year to secure a ruling on the case.

‘Prejudicial question’

“Anybody can question the law, but I think it might affect the running of the period if the RTC will take note of that petition and consider it a prejudicial question,” he said.

Gonzalez added that the lower court could be prevented from coming out with a ruling on the principal case if there would be a prejudicial question related to the case pending before a higher court.

“What the VFA says is that any delay on the part of the defense stops the running of the period. But here, this is the move of the prosecution, not the defense. That’s why it will affect the running of the period. They might run out of time,” Gonzalez stressed.

He advised the prosecution lawyers to just proceed with the trial of the case.

“If the prosecution feels they have strong evidence, they should proceed immediately,” he said.

Launching of private impeachment bid reset

From page A1

Organizers on Monday announced the private impeachment initiative would be launched yesterday. Late in the day, they said that it had been rescheduled for Thursday. What had been billed as a launching turned out to be a forum on impeachment.

Last year, the minority in the House of Representatives bungled an attempt to unseat Ms Arroyo over allegations she stole the 2004 elections—a charge the President has vehemently denied.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Panfilo Lacson earlier yesterday said the fresh impeachment complaint would have better chances of prospering because of the high credibility of the new cast of complainants.

“I hope that the signing on of these individuals as complainants will induce the congressmen to look at the impeachment complaint with dispassionate eyes,” Pimentel said in an interview.

Lacson said the new group of complainants would lend credibility to the impeachment efforts.

“These individuals will be an attraction to a wider audience owing to their perceived apolitical positions on current issues,” he said.

Lawyer Harry Roque on Monday said that leading civic and religious leaders would file a complaint with the House of Representatives charging Ms Arroyo with culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of the public trust to cover up alleged election fraud.

The filing is set for June 26, when the one-year ban on the filing of an impeachment complaint against the President expires.

Pimentel said he would not dissuade opposition congressmen, as he had done last year, from pressing ahead with an impeachment complaint this year, and would rather wish them well.

“This time, I will leave the matter to the discretion of our House colleagues. I know it’s going to be an uphill battle but the outcome will determine if it’s worth taking or not,” he said.

“I will not douse their efforts with cold water. ‘Do your best and let’s see how it comes out.’”

The senator had been cool to the filing of an impeachment complaint, which he predicted would be quashed by the sheer number of administration congressmen, and instead proposed the holding of snap presidential and vice presidential elections.

The impeachment complaint was dismissed on a technicality by the administration-dominated House in early September last year.

Pimentel said Ms Arroyo deserved to be impeached.

“Her blatant misuse of public funds to buy the House prevented the impeachment the first time around,” he said.

In his informal meeting with them, Pimentel said the opposition congressmen had indicated that they would be more cautious when gathering the signatures of colleagues to transmit the complaint to the Senate.

“This might be a good idea,” he said.

Last year, the opposition failed to muster the 79 votes required to transmit the complaint to the Senate for trial, with some lawmakers withdrawing at the last minute and others not showing up during plenary voting.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said the biggest obstacle to the lawmakers would be getting the 79 votes.

“It looks like they haven’t gotten the votes, both from their ranks and the majority. But who knows?” Angara said in a brief interview.

During the forum at the Manila Polo Club yesterday, UP professor Randy David said the filing of the impeachment complaint was the only constitutional procedure left to put a closure to the crisis of legitimacy hounding Ms Arroyo.

“To impeach Mrs. Arroyo is to protect the constitutional order. It is to defend what remains of our democratic institutions from the sustained assault to which they have been relentlessly subjected by a reckless politician and her civilian and military allies,” David said in his speech.

Negotiated PNP deals defended

From page A1

ization of police vehicles and equipment.

Acquiring the vehicles through public bidding may in fact be detrimental to the government, according to the head of the PNP bids and awards committee (BAC).

Deputy Director Avelino Razon Jr., chair of the BAC, said a company could offer a cheap price for each car, but the vehicles may end up in the junk yard after a year for lack of spare parts.

“And if you bring them to the province, there is no dealer (there) that could service the vehicle,” he said.

PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao explained that his men “can hardly secure” the delegates to the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit scheduled for December without the equipment.

Interestingly, the reasons cited by officials yesterday were not included in the BAC resolutions.

When it was pointed out that the police did a terrific job in securing a meeting of hundreds of foreign parliamentarians last year even without the new cars, motorcycles and handguns, Lomibao said:

“Well, if I go into the details, it would take time to explain. I read the article that you published and I think all the actions that we did were defensible.”

Lomibao said the decisions of the BAC were “extensively discussed” and supported by legal officers, as well as the Commission on Audit.

Savings

The PNP Legal Services Unit pointed that the police had, in fact, already saved some P56 million.

A police document listed down the savings as follows:

- The 9-mm pistols offered by Trust Trade, the supplier, cost only P19,400 each or some P97 million for 5,000 units. The police had originally set aside P151 million for the firearms.
- Each 600-cc Yamaha police motorcycle costs P650,000 for a total of P7.8 million for 12 units. The supplier is Norkis Trading Corp.

The police saved P1.8 million from the P9.6 million originally earmarked by the BAC for the motorcycles.

- Toyota Manila Bay agreed to sell each police car at P795,000 for a total of P161.38 million for 204 cars.

The PNP said it saved some P400,000 from the original budget for 203 cars.

Patrol jeeps

On top of these purchases, the police also plan to acquire 208 patrol jeeps worth P168 million through “negotiated procurement,” according to documents seen by the INQUIRER.

This means the BAC approved in April the acquisition of up to P490 million worth of vehicles and handguns without public bidding. (The figure would be P434 million if the savings were subtracted from the original budget).

But the police have yet to find a supplier for the patrol jeeps, according to Chief Supt. Wilfredo Dulay, head of the PNP Legal Services Unit.

Objections

A supplier the police had initially considered said it could not deliver all the vehicles on time, Dulay said.

Dulay confirmed that some reservations were raised during deliberations on the modes of procurement that the BAC chose. “They were more about the law, more on the legal provisions,” he said of the reservations.

Razon, the BAC chair, had asked during the deliberations that objections to the plan be put in writing.

“They did not offer a written objection,” Dulay said. “So we went ahead.”

The police maintained that there were legal bases for the BAC resolutions.

“Section 441 of the General Accounting and Auditing Manual states that negotiation may be employed whenever the supplies are to be used in connection with a project or activity, which cannot be delayed without causing detriment to public service,” the legal unit said.

It said Republic Act No. 9184 (the Government Procurement Reform Act) did not repeal Section 441 of the GAAM.

In the BAC resolutions, the police justified dispensing with public bidding by saying the vehicles and handguns were urgently needed for the Asean summit.

A bidding would have taken too long and the equipment would not be delivered on time, the resolutions said.

Not allowed

A source in the security establishment, however, told the INQUIRER that this and other justifications cited by the BAC “were not apt” and “did not fall within the ambit of RA 9184.”

Hosting international events was not among the conditions set by law that allow for alternative modes of procurement, the source had said.

Puno said the equipment would not be used for the Asean summit alone.

“Not all the cars will go to Cebu for the Asean event. Obviously, most of the vehicles (would be sent) throughout the country to (address) … the shortage of police cars,” he said.

As for firearms, the police maintain certain specifications, which are obtained through research and field testing, according to the interior secretary.

“Normally, there is only one supplier for that particular type of handgun, so obviously it will be negotiated purchase. There cannot be a public bidding (meant to get) whichever is the cheapest firearm,” Puno said.

He said one could not judge the quality of a handgun on the basis of its low price.

“You really have to negotiate it … You need to standardize because you are talking about regularity of service, the availability of spare parts, and dealers throughout the country,” Puno said.

He narrated how the police had bought firearms, the cheapest then, about a decade ago. It turned out that they needed to be retooled.

Razon said the police also saved a lot by not spending on the forms and on publication of notices required by public bidding.

“Had we gone through a public bidding, maybe it might have been more disadvantageous to the government,” he said.

We'd do well to recall Sin's legacy, says bishop

By Christian V. Esguerra

FILIPINOS SHOULD REMEMBER JAIME Cardinal Sin for three important gifts the late Manila archbishop had left them—freedom, love and the value of dreams.

On the occasion of Sin's first death anniversary tomorrow, his long-time protégé, Balanga Bishop Socrates Villegas yesterday asked the Filipino faithful to show their gratitude to the man who helped topple two unworthy presidents and restore democracy to the country.

At the beginning of a Mass at the Cardinal Sin Village in Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila, Villegas recalled in his homily how Sin had taught the Filipinos to dream and to work at achieving it.

"The cardinal gave us dreams despite the reality that so many Filipinos wanted to go abroad, thinking that hope lay in foreign countries," said Villegas.

"He was the one who gave us hope that the realization of our dreams could be found in the place where we were born, here in the Philippines," he said.

The village, home to many of the poorest residents of Metro Manila, was a symbol of the cardinal's love for the poor, he said.

'Use whatever you want'

Villegas recalled the time he asked Sin for permission to use his name for the planned community, an initiative of the cardinal's friends abroad who wanted to give him a gift.

CARDINAL SIN

"Please allow us to use your name because this project will be for the poor," the bishop recalled telling Sin, who replied: "Use whatever it is that you want about me because I want to show them that I owe them so much."

Sin also offered Filipinos freedom that went beyond emancipation from dictatorial rule, Villegas said.

Freedom

"He gave us freedom from everything that was enslaving us during the last years and months of his life—not just freedom from the dregs in government but also freedom from poverty, those that enchain the poor and others that society had forgotten."

In the rallies that Sin organized, Villegas said the late prelate always arrived early.

Early arrival

"He would call for rallies and he never abandoned us," he said. "Even before we got to the place, he was (already) there waiting for us."

Villegas also described Sin as someone who truly manifested and spread love.

People he also loved

He said the people Sin had also loved were represented by the old, the sickly and the disabled who showed up at his wake at the Manila Cathedral last year.

"I was sad because the world became a lesser place, a less beautiful place with the passing away of the man who loved each of us personally," Villegas said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, June 20, 2006
11th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 K 21:17-29
Gospel: Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus said to his disciples, "You have heard that it was said: Love your neighbor and do not do good to your enemy. But this I tell you: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in Heaven. For he makes his sun rise on both the wicked and the good, and he gives rain to both the just and the unjust.

If you love those who love you, what is special about that? Do not even tax collectors do as much? And if you are friendly only to your friends, what is so exceptional about that? Do not even the pagans do as much? For your part you shall be righteous and perfect in the way your heavenly Father is righteous and perfect."

Commentary

Elijah is sent to deal justly with Ahab over the killing of Naboth (in greed for his vineyard). And Elijah is blunt, declaring that what Ahab has done stands crying out to God and that he will be punished justly for his sin of murder and greed. His line will be cut off as he cut off Naboth's life. He repents (surprise!) and the punishment passes to his son's reign. God does justice for the poor. God forgives but there is justice and it belongs to God.

And Jesus seeks to teach us that we must love everyone, even our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, and whom we fear. God lets everyone live, the just and unjust, and we are to be like God, not like everyone else. We are to learn (and this is hard) the compassion we have known from God, and practice it towards all. This is the new prophet's word.

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Protests mark Suu Kyi's 61st birthday

FILIPINO ACTIVISTS WEARING chains and carrying a replica of a giant cake trooped to the Burmese (Myanmar) Embassy in Makati City on Monday to demand the release of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi on her birthday, as she turned 61 under house arrest.

More than a dozen members of the Free Burma Coalition carried placards reading "Free Burma Now" and "Free all political prisoners in Burma."

"We think that calling for Suu Kyi's release would be the best gift we can offer on her birthday," said Gus Miclat, a coalition spokesperson, in a statement protesting the Burmese government's recent decision to extend Suu Kyi's house arrest another year.

The protesters, two of them with chains around their ankles, were joined by two South Korean activists.

The demonstrators had with them a giant cardboard "cake" bearing a picture of Suu Kyi and the number 61. They also attached buntings to the facade of the building housing the embassy as a handful of policemen watched.

"The junta's decision extending her house arrest can never be acceptable to the international community," Miclat said.

Suu Kyi, the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize laureate and one of the world's most prominent political prisoners, has spent 10 of the last 17 years in confinement.

Burma's ruling military junta took power in 1988 after crushing massive pro-democracy demonstrations in the country they renamed Myanmar.

In 1990, the junta refused to hand over power when Suu Kyi's party won a general election by a landslide.

Crumbling house

In Burma, some 300 supporters kicked off a day of ceremonies near Suu Kyi's crumbling Rangoon (Yangon) house, where she remains isolated from the outside world.

Members of her National League for Democracy (NLD) offered Buddhist prayers and released doves and balloons at their nearby party headquarters as 20 plainclothes security personnel kept a close eye on activities.

NLD supporters clad in the party's orange uniform and T-shirts bearing their leader's picture chanted "Free Suu Kyi!"

"We wish her good health," said Lai Lai, a senior member of the NLD, the opposition party that won the 1990 elections and whose members have been targeted with harassment and arrest.

Suu Kyi, the foreign-educated daughter of national independence hero Gen. Aung San, underwent a hysterectomy in 2003 and was treated last week for stomach troubles, her physician said.

Five Buddhist monks prayed for her health and her immediate release from house arrest.

Supporters in Australia, Asia, Europe and the United States and ethnic minority guerrillas and refugees near and across the Thai border also marked her birthday.

In Bangkok, monks and supporters held a birthday ceremony outside the Burmese Embassy, following similar events with hundreds of people in Kuala Lumpur and New Delhi at the weekend.

In the United States, home to Burma's largest exile community, the Washington-based US Campaign for Burma organized events in more than 270 towns and cities over the weekend to demand her freedom.

Aung San Suu Kyi studied and worked abroad, including for the United Nations, but returned to Burma in 1988 to care for her ailing mother.

That same year, mass pro-democracy rallies broke out but were quashed by the military. Suu Kyi cofounded the NLD and was put under house arrest in 1989. She refused an offer of freedom if she left the country for good.

The opposition party won the 1990 elections by a landslide but the military, which has ruled the country since 1962, ignored the results.

No communication

Her most recent house arrest began after her convoy was attacked by a junta-backed mob during a political tour of northern Burma on May 30, 2003. The attack left four people dead and Aung San Suu Kyi was briefly jailed.

She has had no contact with the outside world since, except for a shortwave radio and a monthly visit from her doctor. She lives with two maids but is not allowed to receive guests, including her two adult sons *AP; AFP*

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2 inches
2 inches
2 inches
4 inches
4 inches

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A tribute to unwavering hope of world's refugees

UNITED Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres (second from right) and other aid officials walk through the Mtabila refugee camp in western Tanzania. REUTERS

(FOLLOWING is the statement of United Nations High Commissioner Antonio Guterres on the occasion of World Refugees Day of 2006.—Ed.)

IMAGINE WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE a refugee, forced to flee persecution, civil war or violence and leaving behind everything that is there—home, family and friends. And suddenly, you find yourself in a strange land, dependent on the protection and help of others. Imagine the sense of isolation, of helplessness, of anxiety about an uncertain future.

And yet, if there is one common trait among the tens of millions of refugees that we at the UN refugee agency have helped over the past 55 years, it's the fact that despite losing everything, they never give up hope.

On this World Refugee Day of 2006, we honor refugees and displaced people all over the world who, on the strength of that hope, have overcome enormous odds to start rebuilding their lives. Each refugee has a different story, but collectively theirs is a story about the triumph of hope over despair.

And we at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees draw great inspiration from their tenacity and courage. We are often asked how we can face the grim reality of our work, year after year, without feeling discouraged. And our answer is simple: If the refugees themselves don't give up hope, how can we?

Their perseverance inspires all of us who work with them to do everything we can to find solutions so that they can get on with their lives. These solutions include voluntary repatriation back to their homeland once conditions allow, or—if this is not possible—integration in the country of first asylum or resettlement to a third country.

Keeping hope alive

In turn, the prospect of such solutions enables refugees to maintain their hope for a better future. And over the past 55 years, UNHCR and its partners have helped more than 50 million uprooted people to restart their lives—and that work continues in more than 100 countries.

But unfortunately, more than 5 million refugees have been in exile for five years or longer—and some of them for decades. Keeping their hope alive is the responsibility of everyone, including international leaders who should be doing more to resolve these situations and to address the root causes of conflict and displacement.

All of us can do our part to give hope to the uprooted—from a simple, welcoming smile to refugees in our own communities, to the participation of individuals, businesses and governments in supporting the field activities of the many humanitarian agencies caring for the displaced. World Refugee Day is part of that common effort as we gather June 20 in cities and towns, in refugee camps and in remote settlements to pay tribute to the courageous, unwavering hope of the world's refugees—and to assure them that they are not forgotten.

Thank you.

An era of declining support for uprooted

From page A1

Mohammad, who fled from Mecca to Medina.

The more prominent ones in recent times were physicist Albert Einstein, former US Secretaries of State Madeline Albright and Henry Kissinger, and Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin.

Their impact on their countries of asylum and the world at large—for better or for worse—has been acknowledged. Mainly, despite a few detractors, hosts confirm refugees have enriched their societies.

Hope over despair

Each year, June 20 has been designated as "World Refugee Day" to remind peoples and nations of the continuing relevance and the need for support of the asylum regime in these uncertain times.

"Each refugee has a different story, but collectively theirs is a story about the triumph of hope over despair," UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres said in a statement issued today. *(See full text above.)*

"If there is one common trait among the tens of millions of refugees that we at the UN refugee agency have helped over the past 55 years, it's the fact that despite losing everything, they never give up hope," Guterres said.

"Hope." That's the theme of this year's celebrations as UNHCR grapples with the problems of migration and xenophobia, particularly in first world countries where most refugees want to build new lives and where they are encountering difficulties in the wake of 9/11.

Fight for refugee status

In recent years, the quality of mercy has shown signs of wearing thin as "compassion fatigue" set in in recession-wracked economies and the world grew weary of internecine conflicts and the specter of terrorism.

For example, Jose Maria Sison, 67, a University of the Philippines professor who founded the Communist Party of the Philippines, was granted asylum in The Netherlands after he received amnesty and was released from jail by President Corazon Aquino in 1986.

In the war against terrorism mounted by the United States after 9/11, the CPP was declared a terrorist organization. Sison's refugee status was subsequently revoked by the Dutch government. He is now battling to remain in The Netherlands.

But Sison's effort might well be in jeopardy after the Arroyo administration announced that it was filing rebellion charges against him.

UNHCR

The Geneva-based UNHCR was set up in 1951 to help victims of World War II. Its work to find solutions for people who have left their countries to escape persecution and violence has not stopped since.

The number of people who have sought UNHCR protection in asylum countries and aid in returning home reached a peak of over 20 million in the post-Cold War era. This followed the disintegration of the Soviet Union and outbreaks of ethnic strife and wars in such areas as Iraq and Afghanistan, the Balkans, Central Asia and Africa.

Last year, the UNHCR said the number of refugees in 2005 had reached a 26-year low of 8.4 million but its global count of uprooted people rose to nearly 21 million. This figure includes people living in "refugee-like situations" within their own countries. In international parlance, they are called "internally displaced people," or the IDPs.

Because of its experience in dealing with displacement following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia under a special mandate, the UNHCR in recent years has been called upon to help the IDPs, or what diplomats have increasingly come to call "internal refugees."

Afghans, Colombians, Iraqis, Sudanese and Somalis mainly account for these people "of concern" to the UNHCR.

Viet refugees

The Philippines was host to thousands of Indochinese refugees who left in rickety boats following the triumph of communist armies in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in the 1970s.

The remaining Vietnamese refugees from camps on Palawan finally won asylum in the United States and departed in 2005, putting a close to one of history's more dramatic moments in the last century.

As a reporter, I covered the arrival of Vietnamese refugees washed ashore in the Philippines after the fall of Saigon, now called Ho Chi Minh City, in 1975.

They brought with them harrowing tales of their flight from Vietnam, their struggle for survival across the South China Sea in leaky boats or overcrowded vessels manned by "human traffickers," their battles against thirst and hunger, pirates and wicked storms.

Their stories were far removed from the fascinating refugee story in the classic movie "Casablanca"—of the star-crossed love affair between a casino operator selling exit visas to those fleeing from Nazi rule played by Humphrey Bogart and an asylum seeker and old Paris flame portrayed by Ingrid Bergman.

Pushbacks

Many of the Vietnamese boat people perished and did not make it to the "first asylum countries" on the rim of the Asia mainland. Even when they did, some were pushed, back out to the sea.

Still, they kept on coming out, until resettlement countries in the West finally hammered out in 1989 a "comprehensive plan of action." This stemmed the tide, but not after a decade of painful initiatives by the international community that included Vietnam, donors and resettlement countries.

By then, I had joined the UNHCR. My first field assignment was Bangladesh, joining a team that provided emergency assistance to some 200,000 Rohingyas who fled rape and forced labor perpetrated by the repressive Burmese regime.

Now that I am out of the agency and have become an INQUIRER editor, I can use the term "repressive."

Back then in the UNHCR, if I had used it in any of my reports, I could have been easily kicked out of the service, even if the intention was to draw world sympathy to those oppressed and put pressure on Rangoon to stop the atrocities. Advocacy is one of the UNHCR's functions.

Solutions often illusive

I would have been accused of endangering UNHCR work, angering donors sympathetic to Burma and compromising a possible diplomatic solution, even if that took years. Resolving a refugee situation is often a long and tedious process.

There is still a "residual caseload" of some 20,000 Rohingyas in camps outside Cox's Bazar.

The agency's staff members learn to be circumspect to be able to bring relief aid, keep asylum countries from expelling refugees and help in their eventual repatriation or resettlement.

These continuing tasks are highlighted in High Commissioner Guterres' message today and his agency's report on the state of the world's refugees and the IDPs that he has to care for. It also stressed the need for support of his staff if they are to continue to save lives and make a difference.

VIETNAMESE refugees in the Philippines prepare for resettlement in the United States. PDI PHOTO

Genocide in Darfur

The continuing displacement in the Darfur region of Sudan is one of the UNHCR's biggest preoccupations these days.

There, Janjaweed Arab militias continue to go on a rampage in what humanitarian workers have described as a campaign of ethnic cleansing—something they shuddered at in the Balkans and the tiny Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan in the 1990s.

Washington says the atrocities committed against the Darfurians constituted genocide.

In one of my last assignments before I left the UNHCR just over a year ago, I went to eastern Chad where our staff had been providing assistance in camps set up for some 200,000 people, mainly women and children, from Darfur.

The main difficulty was that the refugees refused to go far from their mud huts on the other side, where around a million more of their kind had been uprooted. They preferred to remain in the harsh frontier in the tri-state border of Libya, Chad and Sudan. There's no water in the desert there, where it's blistering hot during the day and freezing during the night, and where distributing food also meant battling sand storms.

The Congo

Another area of major concern reported by the UNHCR is the Democratic Republic of Congo. The ramifications of the genocide that tore apart tiny Rwanda in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa 12 years ago and left some 800,000 people dead continue to haunt the DRC, previously called Zaire, where the "genociders" had fled.

I had kept track out of Geneva of developments on the ground in Rwanda, reporting on atrocities in remote communes as gangs of the majority Hutus hunted the Tutsi minority.

On April 28, 1994, I got on the phone to our field officer in Tanzania. She was frantic. A quarter of a million Rwandans had just swept into Tanzania over the past 24 hours as Tutsi rebels based in Uganda staged an uprising across the former Belgian colony.

The field officer was trying to mobilize assistance for the refugees along the border town of Ngara. That's how fast situations could develop in the UNHCR and underscored its need for wherewithal up front.

Two summers ago, I joined a US diplomatic delegation that was looking into the possibility of helping repatriate Congolese refugees languishing in camps in Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda.

The refugees had been forced from their homes in off-and-on battles between Congolese forces, armed groups loyal to Rwanda fighting Rwandan insurgents based in the DRC frontier and a mishmash of alphabet soup local militias that were fighting alongside Tutsis and Hutus, the antagonists in the Rwanda conflict.

Intense fighting broke out in Bukavu, scuttling the US effort and prompting the evacuation of the delegation from the lovely town in eastern DRC at the edge of Lake Kivu.

Heart of darkness

It is a region rich in minerals, gold and diamonds but has ironically remained mired in extreme poverty. This heart of darkness had fired the imagination of Joseph Conrad. Local art works had inspired such impressionists as Picasso and Matisse. Violence continue to scar the area.

In recent years, humanitarian workers themselves have become targets in conflict situations. Even the symbol of the Red Cross is no longer honored.

In some ways, this has restricted activities of UNHCR workers in the field. In some ways, the people themselves who humanitarian agencies are trying to help are responsible.

Officials in the Rwanda capital of Kigali used to denounce Hutu insurgents allegedly using as staging areas for attacks on Rwanda camps heroically carved out of virtual moonscapes dotted with bubbling volcanoes in the DRC's Goma region by aid workers.

Their fulminations seem to echo in the case of Sison in the picture pretty town of Utrecht in the Netherlands. Refugees aren't supposed to subvert their countries of origin.

Silk-stockinged

Marcos had himself railed against activities of his political enemies who had become refugees in the United States. His propagandists used to call them either the "silk-stockinged revolutionaries" or derisively as the "steak commandoes."

In recent years, the work of the UNHCR has been further complicated by the influx of the so-called "economic migrants" in the West and the activities of "human smugglers" bringing Asians, Africans and Eastern Europeans who are trying to escape poverty at home and seek opportunities in the industrial heartlands of the West.

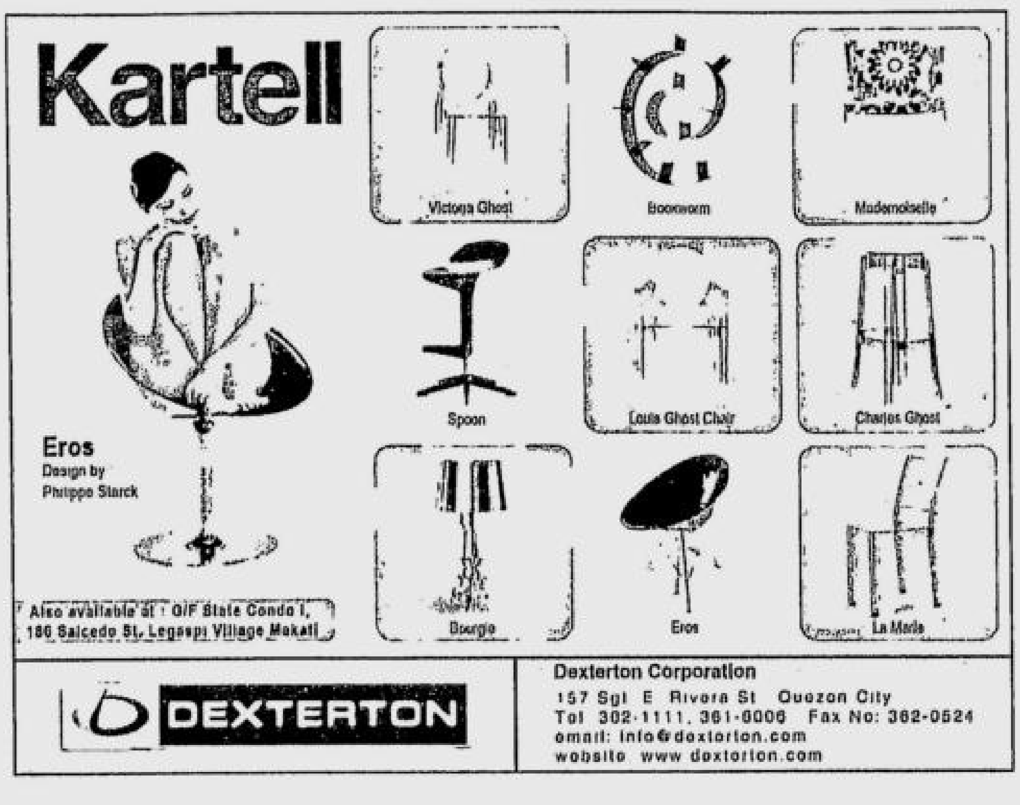
Throw in there—again for better or for worse depending on one's perspective—the Filipino TNTs. They are the shadowy souls in the affluent countries trying to eke out a living despite the odds to help families back home reeling under an economy kept afloat by dollar remittances of overseas workers.

'... Your huddled masses'

Nationalist groups in England, France and Austria, among others, have confused illegal immigrants with asylum seekers, diluting the refugee instrument that has served well those genuinely in need.

There's an inscription on the Statue of Liberty on Ellis island that never ceases to arouse the emotion of visitors: "Give me your tired, your poor huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

It remains a cornerstone of the asylum regime that the UNHCR attempts to keep open to those who deserve it and many feel remains relevant to this day—as in the case of Benigno Aquino 26 years ago.



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Group wants Charter change ...

From page A1

the House of Representatives but retain the Senate.

Tugon ng Bayan identifies itself as a national people's movement for political, economic, cultural and electoral reforms.

Unlike Sigaw ng Bayan that favors a signature drive to amend the Constitution, Tugon ng Bayan is calling for Charter change through a constitutional convention whose members are elected.

"We agree that there should be Charter change. However, we strongly disagree with the current proposal of Sigaw ng Bayan for our country to again shift to a parliamentary form of government," said Francisco Catibayan III, one of Tugon ng Bayan's convenors.

Catibayan said the parliamentary system adopted during the Marcos regime did not work.

Catibayan was a member of the National Youth Commission during the Ramos administration and one of the prime movers of Kabayan for President Movement that pushed then Sen. Noli de Castro to run for president in 2004.

He said a strong presidential and unicameral system would work for the country.

Sigaw ng Bayan is set to file a petition in the Commission on Elections attesting that it had gathered more than 9 million signatures. Proponents of a people's initiative must collect the signatures of at last 12 percent of all the registered voters nationwide and 3 percent in each legislative district.

Malacañang is supporting the signature drive as the Senate and the House are unable to agree on the proposal to amend the Constitution through Congress being convened into a constituent assembly.

Catibayan said Tugon ng Bayan would campaign for the immediate abolition of the House and the strengthening of the Senate.

"If the House is abolished, there will be savings of about P20 billion in pork barrel funds alone per year. This can be used instead for education and social services," he said.

Catibayan also noted that most members of the House were often absent, resulting in a great waste of taxpayers' money.

Catibayan said only 10 percent of the House members were competent.

"These 25 deserving congressmen are qualified to run for the Senate. The other 90 percent or around 225 congressmen may just run for mayor or governor in their respective towns or provinces. Anyway, they are more into local or parochial agenda," the Tugon ng Bayan convenor said.

Keep Cha-cha out of schools, say studes

By Alcuin Papa

MILITANT STUDENTS yesterday warned the government to keep Charter change away from the schools.

Kabataan Party vice president Carl Marc Ramota said in a statement the government would be better off holding forums on the problems of the educational system rather than trying to woo students to support the Palace-backed Charter change initiative.

"The government wants to sponsor forums and encourages debates on Cha-cha in schools yet it remains silent and inefficient on the very issues that continue to cripple our education system. There are more important issues that deserve thorough discussion and immediate action, such as finding solutions to alleviate poverty and hunger and save the education sector from its pitiful condition, other than selfish political moves and platforms," Ramota said.

He said that while the government seemed to have the funds for forums on Charter change, "state schools remain strapped and operate in decrepit conditions due to poor education spending."

Ramota also said that contrary to claims made by Cha-cha advocates, the proposal to amend the Constitution did not enjoy wide support from the students.

"If they think they can fool students to support Arroyo's Cha-cha, then they are terribly mistaken. The youth are more critical and discerning. We definitely know better and no amount of politicking can make the youth believe otherwise," he said.

Ramota said the proposed changes to the Constitution were clearly anti-youth as they seek to delete several provisions that are supportive of the youth and students.

"How can they say that Cha-cha is for the youth if it seeks to delete the Constitutional provisions that recognize the youth's role in nation-building and instruct the government to give priority to education and the welfare of young Filipinos?" he pointed out.

Under the proposed Cha-cha, Sections 13 and 17 of Article II, or the Declaration of State Policies and Principles, which give proper recognition to the youth's important role in society and stipulate the protection of the youth's welfare and right to education will be deleted.

"There is no place for Arroyo's Cha-cha train on our campuses. The youth and students will continue to be at the forefront of the fight to stop Cha-cha and defend our democracy, independence and civil liberties. The only place for the Cha-cha express is the junkyard of history," Ramota said.

RP-wide quake drills set at schools today

MILLIONS OF STUDENTS IN THE PUBLIC ELementary and high schools will participate in a nationwide earthquake drill today, officials announced yesterday.

At exactly 9 a.m., sirens would go off simultaneously at 42,000 public schools to signal the start of simulated evacuation procedures during an earthquake.

"There is no scientific way to predict earthquakes but common sense dictates we should prepare for a major one... because it's happening to our neighbors," said Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. in a press conference at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday. The briefing was attended by officials of various government departments and agencies.

Cruz, who chairs the multi-agency National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), was referring to the powerful earthquakes that recently struck Japan and Indonesia, where thousands were killed.

He said the drills will test the preparedness of the public schools "since children are most vulnerable when earthquakes strike."

Cruz said the schools would be evaluated on how well they could respond to a strong earthquake.

Of the 42,000 public elementary and high schools nationwide, 152 were chosen as pilot schools to coordinate, evaluate and report on the outcome of the drills in their areas. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

'Tiya Dely' cited

FIDELA "TIYA DELY" Magpayo is this year's recipient of the UP Gawad Plaridel from the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication.

Magpayo was chosen for excellence and versatility in the field of radio broadcasting; her unblemished reputation and credibility as a broadcast practitioner; her advocacy of Filipino talents and the performing arts; her consistent efforts to instill Filipino values and propagate the use of the national language, and her ability to reach out to the widest audience possible.

The award comes with a trophy by National Artist Napoleon Abueva. At the award rites on July 4 at the Cine Adarna of the UP Film Institute, Magpayo will deliver a lecture on contemporary Philippine cinema.

Established by the UP College of Mass Communication, the annual Gawad Plaridel recognizes Filipino media practitioners who have excelled in any of the media and performed with the highest level of integrity. On its third year, earlier Gawad Plaridel recipients were Eugenia Duran-Apostol and Vilma Santos.

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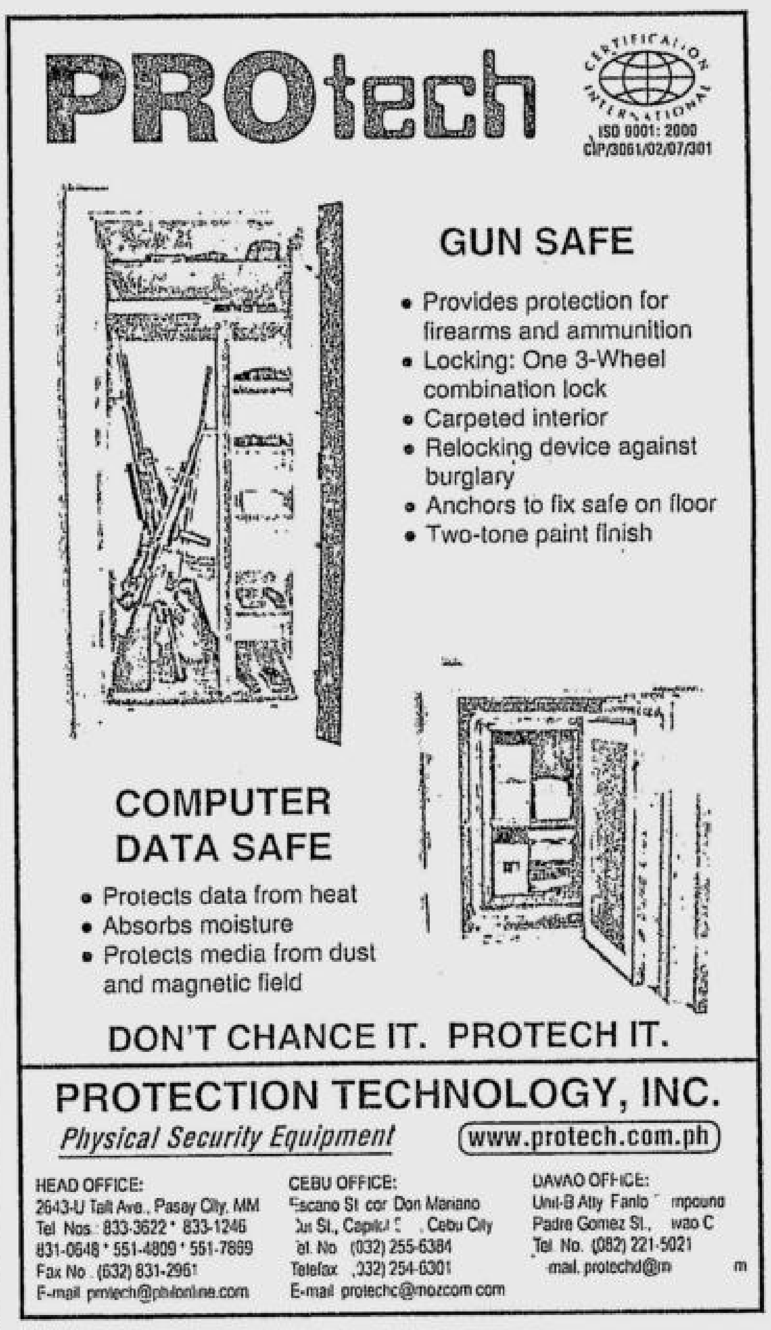

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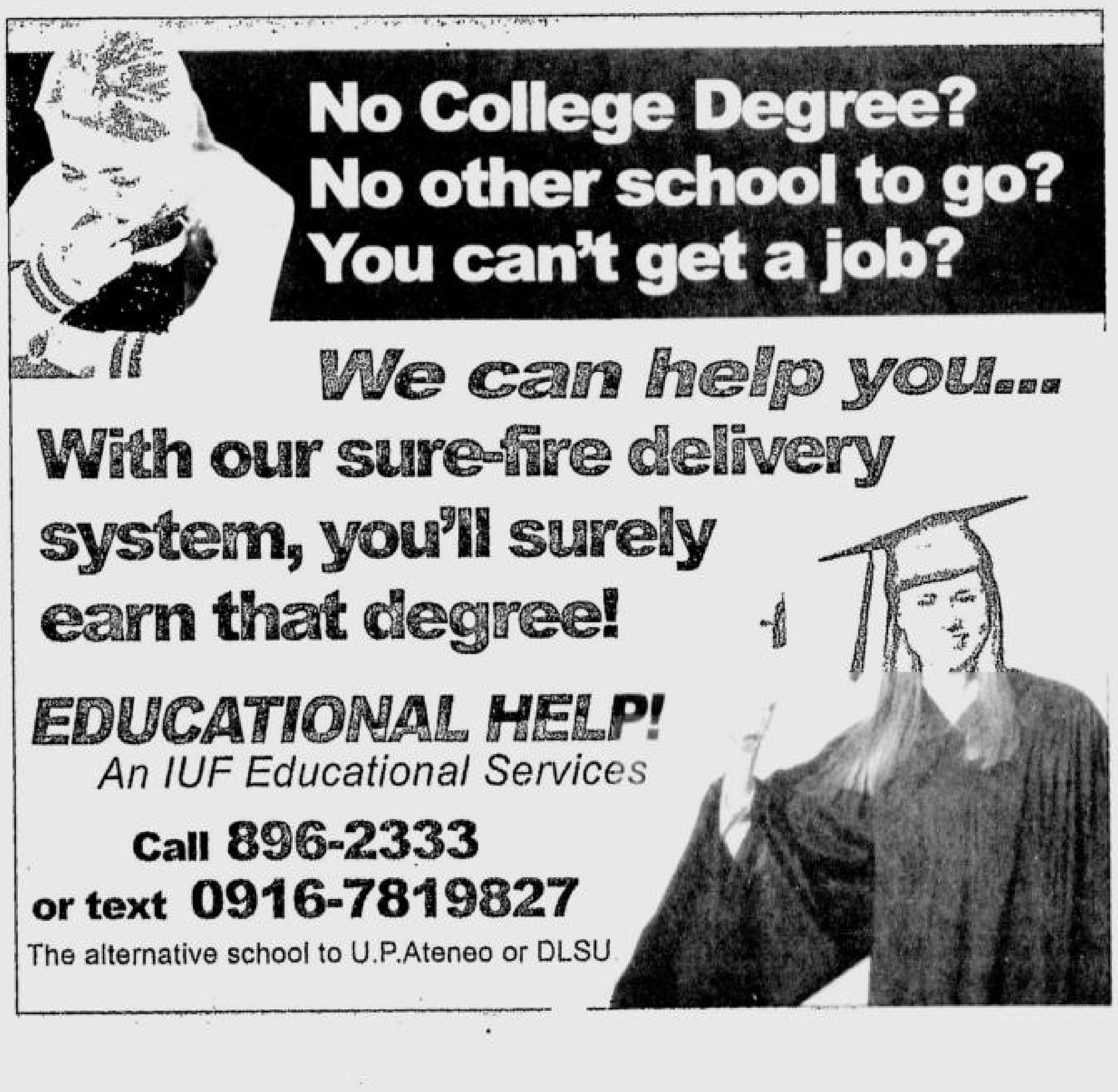

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3 Army battalions join anti-NPA drive

From page A1

The new units that had been added to Cabuay's command were made up of 1,500 men belonging to the 3rd, 4th and 9th Infantry Battalions.

The 3rd IB will be placed under the command of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, the feared NPA nemesis who operates in Central Luzon and parts of northern Luzon, while the 4th IB will be based in Tanay, Rizal, according to Cabuay.

The 9th IB will be deployed to Bicol.

On arriving at Camp Nakar, the veteran combatants were treated to a "boodle fight" lunch of rice, hard-boiled eggs, smoked fish and sardines.

Reduced fighting

Cabuay told the INQUIRER that wiping out the NPA rebels would be easier with the pull-out of several units from Mindanao in the wake of the reduced fighting there as a result of the peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

He rejected suggestions that the reinforced campaign against the NPA would result in more human rights violations.

"That was an unfair impression. For one, only 20 percent of our soldiers are directly involved in combat operations against the enemy," Cabuay said.

"The rest are involved in civic operations. They build roads, schools and barangay halls. They even plant trees in our ravaged forests."

Cruz firm on 10 years

Military intelligence estimates the NPA's strength at 7,400 men. It reached its peak of over 25,000 fighters in the late 1980s.

The NPA claims to have established 120 so-called guerrilla zones covering 800 municipalities in 70 provinces nationwide.

Presidential Chief of Staff Mike Defensor said last week that Ms Arroyo had found "too long" the defense department timetable of beating the insurgency within 10 years and that she wanted a victory in "critical areas" in Luzon in one to two years.

Other Cabinet ministers later disputed Defensor's statement, saying Ms Arroyo wanted the rebels vanquished by the end of her term in 2010.

Yesterday, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. stuck to his original target.

Cutting up the money

"(Our fight) will be finished in six to 10 years. But for the critical areas, we want to see dramatic results within two years," Cruz told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo.

He said he agreed with Defensor's idea of having short-, medium- and long-term targets.

He identified the critical areas as Central Luzon, Southern Luzon and Sorsogon province.

Ms Arroyo has announced she would release an extra P1 billion to boost military and police operations against the communists.

Yesterday, she said P400 million of the amount would go to the Armed Forces and this would be used for such things as buying hardware.

Another P300 million will be used for the "left-hand approach, which is community development in the areas already freed of the insurgency," and the other P300 million will go to the Philippine National Police, Ms Arroyo said.

Discipline needed

"You can reallocate part of this to buy more guns for the anti-insurgency campaign," Ms Arroyo told Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao.

Cruz tried to soften the impact of the President's order, which has been seen as tantamount to an open declaration of war.

"It's not an all-out war. It's a total government approach," he said. "If it's only up to the military, it cannot be done. We should have a strong military and a total government approach."

With the heightened campaign against the NPA, Cruz said civilian casualties were unavoidable and asked military commanders to ensure discipline among their troops.

"Discipline is important. It is very important to minimize collateral damage. That was the experience in Basilan. There should be discipline among the troops," he said.

Support from foe

Ms Arroyo yesterday got an unexpected ally in her stepped-up war with the communist rebels.

Backing the P1-billion boost in military funds, opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said it was high time the government took serious efforts to end the insurgency and its root causes, such as poverty and injustice.

"It is high time that the government showed its iron fist against communist rebels," Lacson said in a statement.

But Lacson said the war should not be at the expense of human rights and that the government should institute safeguards against corruption in the disbursement of such a huge amount.

An administration senator said a military solution alone would not end the insurgency.

Sen. Ralph Recto said, "The problem is economic and until we solve the economic problems … we cannot do away with the problem of the communist rebellion."

Senga echoed the same theme in Cavite, saying the insurgency problem would not be solved through military operations alone.

He said the government must also show the people that it could deliver the basic services needed.

"(Insurgency) is not just the problem of the AFP and our government. This concerns all Filipinos," he said.

As part of the heightened operations against the communist rebels, Senga said the military would deploy more troops from Mindanao to rebel areas in Luzon. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Juliet Labog-Javellana*

PHILIPPINE Navy SEALS maneuver for assault during a counterterrorist training demonstration at Sangley Point in Cavite City. PHOTOS BY EDWIN BACASMAS

ARMED Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga gasps for air after swimming for a kilometer as part of his initiation as an adopted Navy SEALS member.

WHILE their comrades provide cover, two elite Navy troops approach a target as part of their training to counter the insurgency.

Gov't eyes local peace initiatives

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION YESTERDAY rejected any move to return to the peace table with communist leaders anytime soon, saying it would rather pursue peace initiatives at the local level for now.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor indicated the government was not about to resume talking peace with National Democratic Front leaders.

"(The government peace panel) will (still) be there but at the same time we'll pursue peace initiatives at the local level," Bunye told reporters.

"There are groups that have expressed their intention to return to the government fold and to help the government," he added.

Defensor said that going back to the peace table with NDF leaders was something "worth looking at, but what's important is the local peace initiative."

Peace and order councils

He said that while in the past it was the national government that negotiated peace with the NDF, it was now important to emphasize pursuing local peace initiatives.

"We don't have to be dependent on that (talks with the NDF)," Defensor said, noting that holding talks at the national level tended to be chaotic.

Existing peace and order councils in the regions could be "revived" for these local peace initiatives, he said.

NPA to benefit, too

Defensor said he was aware, for instance, that local officials in Isabela, a hotbed of the insurgency, were holding "back-channel" talks with the local NPA.

With the government pushing through with its mega development plans in northern Luzon, Defensor underscored the need to negotiate peace in the area while the development projects were being implemented "because NPA members and their families will also benefit from them."

He said it was quicker to attain peace at the local level.

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Civilian supporters of NPA warned

CIVILIAN SUPPORTERS OF THE NEW PEOPLE'S Army may find themselves the target of military operations if they join the rebels in combat, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez warned yesterday.

In an interview, Gonzalez said it was best for people to help keep the peace to avoid becoming "collateral damage" during skirmishes between soldiers and insurgents.

Asked if troops would go after civilian supporters of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its army, Gonzalez replied: "Supporters can be combatants ... If they are combatants or join combatants during their armed operations, why not?"

He noted there could be supporters joining the combatants by carrying their bullets and other equipment, or helping in the rebels' plotting and identifying targets of attack.

In such cases, he said "they could be charged as conspirators."

"The best way is to canalize the role played by the people who are involved," Gonzalez said of the need to clearly identify combatants and noncombatants.

He cited cases involving children and women recruited by the NPA who later got hurt during armed clashes or during military or police raids.

"In any battle, there will be civilian casualties ... which is not intended," Gonzalez said, adding:

"The government never likes to hurt civilians. That's why you speak about collateral damage." *Armand N. Nocum*

Left groups on orders of battle, say papers

From page A1

antry, as well as professionals.

"It is often the case that whatever assessment is produced, it is invariably inconclusive, superficial, and/or completely off-tangent with the real picture," the document said.

Quarterly review

The "target research concept" would require intelligence units to do an extensive research on "sectoral and NDF front (National Democratic Front) organizations," starting in September 2004 until June 2005. Their output would serve as a basis for a quarterly "sectoral and front organization order of battle," according to the document.

An order of battle is a list of enemies ranked according to their importance.

Background information accompanying the paper showed the front organizations to be instrumental in bringing the Communist Party of the Philippines' program to the fore through the various sectors they represent.

"CPP programs are being implemented on the various sectors composing the positive forces of the revolution which is crafted and implemented through the different CPP sectoral front organizations," the paper said.

Via e-mail

The KMP, the national alliance of peasant organizations, said it submitted the papers to Human Rights Commissioner Dominador Calamba two weeks ago.

Carl Anthony Ala, KMP information officer, said his group received the documents via e-mail from a source inside Camp Aguinaldo.

The INQUIRER likewise received copies of the same documents from a source close to personalities in the military and in the mainstream opposition.

"The papers don't say outright that members of sectoral groups are to be killed but they do use the term neutralize. Now, what does neutralize mean? These already point to the attacks against members of militant groups," Ala told the INQUIRER.

The use of the term "Order of Battle" in which sectoral groups would be listed also had the militant group thinking they would be placed on a so-called hit list.

Phase 2 and 3

Phase 2 of the target research would require the drawing up of "a separate" order of battle for sectoral and front organizations.

Phase 3 requires a case buildup against personalities and sectoral organizations supporting the CPP, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front.

Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao yesterday said he believed the government could stamp out the insurgency in two years if it is supported by the public.

It would also be up to the public to monitor human rights abuses that might arise as a result of the stepped-up campaign against the rebels, Lomibao said.

Government warned

"If all helped here, [it can be done]. The police are not the only force. This is a total approach. It will involve local government units and all agencies of government to support this program," he said.

"But most specially, [it will need] the support of the masses, the entire Filipino people," Lomibao said.

"Collateral damage" can also be avoided if operational procedures are closely followed, he said.

The announced administration objective of finally eliminating the insurgency prompted human rights groups yesterday to warn the government against violating its commitment to international human rights agreements.

The Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (Pahra) said the past campaigns of Presidents Joseph Estrada against the Moro rebels and Corazon Aquino against the communists gave rise to the phenomenon of internal refugees.

Facing world community

"With the history we have, we know that human rights can never be protected, so we expect a rise in human rights violations with this policy," Pahra secretary general Renato Mabunga said in a forum.

"I don't know how the Philippines can face the international community if human rights violations rise between now and 2008, when they expect to end the insurgency," Mabunga said.

The Philippines is a signatory to the International Covenant on Ecoomic, Social and Cultural Rights and is a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

Band-aid solution

"International human rights law strongly states that collateral damage should be avoided by all means," said Ric Reyes, former executive director of the Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Services.

Amnesty International (AI) said the campaign was another band-aid solution to "a problem that is way, way deeper than it seems" and which would not end while poverty lingered.

Laban ng Masa chair Francisco Nemenzo said Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's statement that the loss of innocent lives might be unavoidable in the campaign against insurgency was a "barefaced admission of disrespect for human rights."

"It is another policy statement giving official consent to the rampage of political killings ... [of] unarmed activists," Nemenzo said.

Cases before UN

"The P1 billion of the Arroyo ... [administration for military spending] will not amount to anything because the people's struggle will reemerge," Nemenzo said. "There will always be those who will take up arms because of these policies."

Laban ng Masa, along with other groups, plan to bring up the human rights violations cases in the UNHRC, which convened in Geneva yesterday.

"If the government finds it honorable to be a human rights protector, it should curtail policies that violate human rights," Mabunga said. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto and Blanche S. Rivera*

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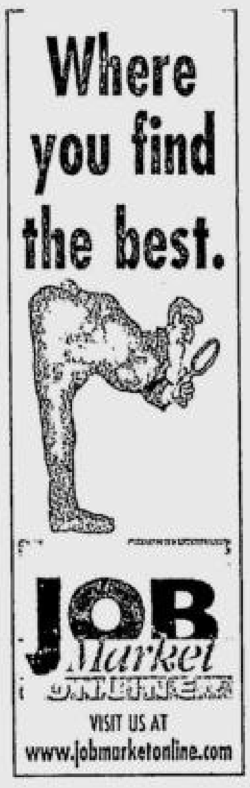

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Don't keep Joma, Dutch gov't told

By Armand N. Nocum

THE GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO BE BENT on demonizing Jose Ma. "Joma" Sison, exiled founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, before the eyes of his Dutch hosts.

That, at least, was the impression that Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez gave yesterday.

In an interview, Gonzalez said the cases the government had filed against Sison in provincial courts were primarily intended to get him kicked out of the Netherlands, where he has been living in exile for 13 years.

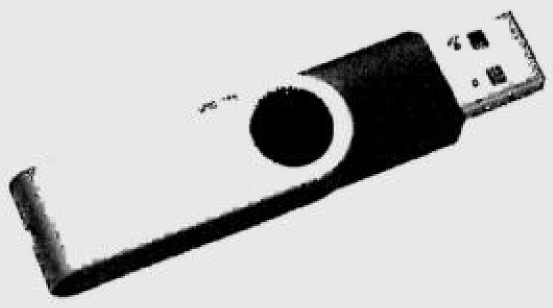
"We are trying to convince the Netherlands to think that ... Sison is a criminal and they should not harbor criminals," he said of their objective in filing murder charges against Sison for the killing of ranking communist leaders Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara.

"We are laying the ground rules to get the Netherlands to be convinced that these people are undesirables," he said. "If the Netherlands government will expel him, what can he do? He has no passport?"

The Philippine government had canceled Sison's passport.

Gonzalez said Sison had also been charged with the killing of Cagayan Valley Gov. Rodolfo Aguinaldo.

"There are people complaining against them (the communists). The wives of some of the people whom they have killed are complaining against them. The government has filed charges against Sison and his group. These cases must be filed so that the Netherlands would know," Gonzalez said.



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‘Collateral damage’

EDITORIAL

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ SAID THE other day that “you can’t avoid collateral damage” in the conduct of the government’s all-out campaign against the communist insurgency. He said the loss of civilian lives might be unavoidable in the all-out war.

“Collateral damage,” a euphemism first used by the United States military, means damage and destruction of targets or personnel not considered as lawful military targets. The term was frequently used during the Vietnam War and, again, during the invasion of Iraq.

Inadvertent casualties and destruction inflicted on civilians during military operations are usually acceptable. Accidents do happen in everyday life, even in peacetime situations. But the trouble with the planned all-out war is that “collateral damage” may become not just an accidental or isolated occurrence but a fact of everyday life because of the overweening desire of President Macapagal-Arroyo and her generals to finish off the communist insurgency within two years.

Even now, while the all-out campaign has not officially started, leftist activists are being killed by the scores. Not a week passes when a leftist activist is not slain in some part of the country. To date, 213 leftists have been killed, and the principal suspects are the Armed Forces and the police. With the acceleration of the campaign against the communist insurgency, shall we expect a doubling, if not a tripling, of the casualties in the ranks of the activists?

The killing of the armed members of the New People’s Army is to be expected. After all, they have taken up arms against the government, and they should expect violence to be met with violence. But what about the unarmed leftists who have chosen the legal path to wage their fight? Are they now officially fair game for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police and their shadowy intelligence, special forces and paramilitary units?

We suppose the intensified campaign will involve the concentration of forces on certain towns and cities identified as hotbeds of communist insurgency. Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, commander of the 7th Infantry Divison, has pinpointed as targets the towns of Lubao and Sasmuan in Pampanga and the towns of Penaranda and General Tinio and Gapan City in Nueva Ecija.

Palparan, whose iron-hand ways of dealing with rebels and their sympathizers has earned him the moniker of “Berdugo” (Executioner or Butcher), can be expected not to give a hoot about the lives and human rights of unarmed leftists and civilian sympathizers of the NPA. Wherever Palparan has been assigned he has left a trail of death and destruction. Can he be expected to be any more careful about observing the sanctity of the lives of unarmed civilians, as well as their human rights, now that the go ahead has been given for a full-blast offensive? And how many more Palparans are there in the military?

Can we expect the military and the police not to gun down unarmed, defenseless civilians suspected of harboring NPA guerrillas? Shall we now resign ourselves to seeing entire villages and barangays being shot up and razed and their people rounded up and interned on suspicion that they are NPA sympathizers, if not actually NPA guerrillas?

Can we expect the military to be careful to avoid killing unarmed civilians caught in the crossfire? Gonzalez has already given them a ready and pat answer: “They are part of the collateral damage” of the intensified campaign against communist insurgency.

Massacres and bloodbaths have all been carried out in the name of suppressing insurgencies and civil wars. After the Balangiga massacre, American soldiers waged a “kill and burn” campaign designed to reduce Samar to “a howling wilderness” during the Filipino-American War (called the “Philippine Insurgency” by the Americans). The massacre at My Lai was one of the most horrifying events during the Vietnam War which the great superpower America lost to Vietnamese wearing only black pajamas and rubber sandals and armed with the most primitive of weapons. In Iraq, scores of civilians are being slain in the campaign to stamp out the resistance. Are these considered “collateral damage”?

We don’t think the President and her generals will give a damn if unarmed leftist militants and activists and innocent civilians are killed in the all-out war against communist insurgency. They have a deadly mission to carry out and a tight timetable to follow, and they will just charge the killing of innocent civilians to a convenient, catch-all euphemism: “collateral damage.”

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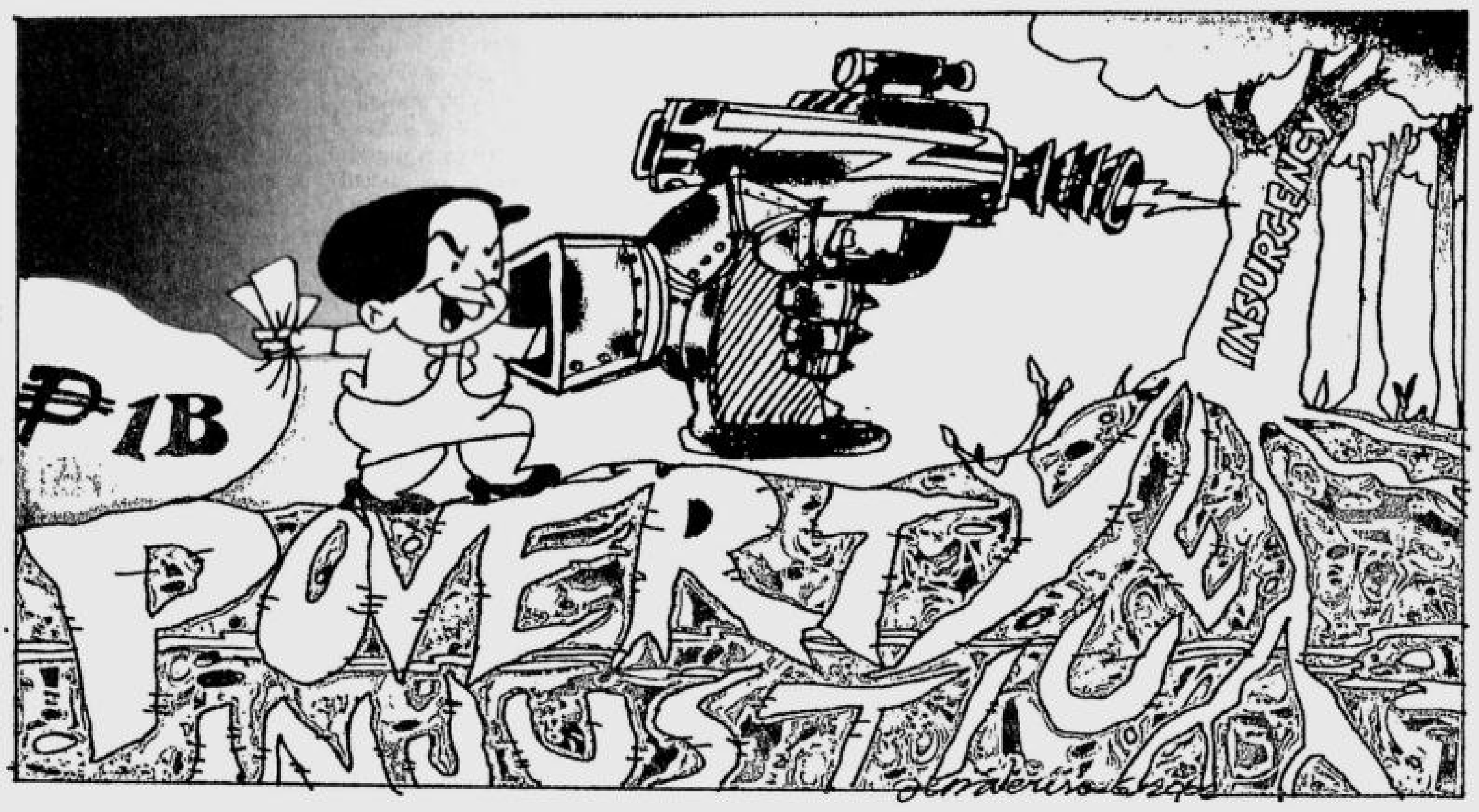

Guarded skepticism

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

AS EXPECTED, THERE'S AN UPROAR OVER President Macapagal Arroyo's "end-game strategy" to crush decisively the festering 37-year communist insurgency.

"Oplan Bantay Laya", we're told, will infuse a billion pesos into the tattered under-funded Armed Forces of the Philippines, the weakest among Asean military forces. It would also plow into insurgent hotbeds P75 billion for development programs, hopefully without politicians pocketing most.

There's cash spilling from the E-VAT and other revenue measures. So, will the administration fund the old "all-out-force and all-out-peace" approach? The late President Ramon Magsaysay decimated the Huk rebellion with that policy.

The reaction, so far, has been one of guarded skepticism. Why?

There've been the predictable knee-jerk reactions. "Hysteria," snorted Jose Ma. Sison from his bourgeois haven in The Hague. Anakpawis Party-List Rep. Rafael Mariano grumbled that the plan "killed the moribund peace talks between government and rebels."

Who's kidding who? There's little prospect of the talks getting anywhere, given irreconcilable ideological convictions, notes the Philippine Human Development Report 2005.

Former communist rebel Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus put it more pithily in an earlier Inq7 interview: 'Jose Ma. Sison is just using (the peace talks) for propaganda purposes.... What he wants is seizure of political power through armed struggle. *Kaya hindi dapat magpauto ang gobyerno dyan.* (Government shouldn't be conned by that)."

But people with no ax to grind are concerned. Rebel ranks have ebbed since its peak in 1987, columnist Armando Doronila notes. There's no threat of a communist takeover. So is the administration using war on the Reds, as the dictator Ferdinand Marcos did, as a ploy for mustering support?

"In equating the Left with armed rebellion, (the President) effectively sanctions the use of death squads to silence political dissenters," social scientist Randy David warns.

The track record underscores this point. In a recent pastoral letter, the three Catholic bishops of Samar, for instance, denounced Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan for trampling on common people in running communists to the ground.

Uneasiness stems from a conviction of many that the insurgency's taproot is not an obsolete failed ideology. At the core of this protracted insurgency's center festers chronic hunger, ill health, shoddy schools and constricted opportunities. People are shut off from land, credit, water, new seeds or fishing grounds, etc. by an avaricious and blind elite: local war lords, caciques, trad pols, with uniformed "praetorian guards." These fan rebellion.

"Oplan Bantay Laya" will be rammed through in a country where three worlds jostle, economist Sixto Roxas pointed out: that of impoverished indigenous people, the countryside folk and imperial urban centers.

Poverty incidence can run as high as 64 percent, as in Zamboanga del Norte, the latest survey shows. These mock the complacent administration claims that benefits will trickle down from a "growing economy."

In such a setting, the poor do not produce. Neither do they bother to conserve increasingly scarce resources like water or forests. Why should they? They have little stake in a system that offers them little beyond redistribution of penury.

Many dispossessed have seen "pro-poor" programs atrophy from bureaucratic sludge. Others have grown cynical over foot-dragging on reforms, by an administration surviving by the skin of it's teeth as well as by a tainted opposition.

This cynicism is corrosive. It exacerbates social tensions. It also lowers the threshold for violence.

"Poverty without end is a state of emergency itself... And the Philippines seems to be always in a state of emergency no matter who is in power." Fr. Shay Cullen wrote in Hong Kong's Sunday Examiner. "As one elite group of powerful families square off against another, the nation stagnates, poverty spreads. And just a few, too few, truly care. That's our permanent state of emergency and there is no end in sight. It's not political. It's moral."

If the past five decades taught us anything, it is this: firepower, or throwing money at embedded social injustices, do not squelch insurgency. Nor will they spur economic breakthroughs. A capacity to blow up the underfed does not ensure national security.

Others question if this will not distract us from the changes in threats to national security.

"Since 1994, (the Philippines') lawless southern islands have replaced Afghanistan as the main training ground and refuge for Southeast Asian jihadists," an Australian National University study points out.

"Graduates of Mindanao's terror camps now rival in number the older generation of Southeast Asian Afghan alumni that forged ties with Al-Qaida," Kit Collier and Malcolm Cook write. "Veterans of Mindanao camps took part in almost every JI-linked bombing...

A crack down in Indonesia is driving terrorists out. Southern Thailand is sealed off for them. So, they seep across Mindanao's porous borders and "are embedded in a volatile Muslim insurgency." The MILF, however, "is riven by factions, and its leaders can ot, or will not, exclude terrorists from areas that they control."

"Only in the Philipppines do state failure, chronic insurgency and proliferating ties between local and foreign terrorists come together in a lethal cocktail," they add. "State failure in southern Philippines now places the entire region at risk."

Just how "Oplan Bantay Laya" addresses this emerging threat is not clear. The murkiness explains part of today's skepticism.

Scourge

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SAW THE BBC DOCUMENTARY "HISTORY of World War II," a magnificent 25-disc work, some months ago, and found its first three parts in particular, entitled "The Nazis: A Warning from History" not just completely fascinating but completely relevant to our times. Of course, nothing can ever compare with the evil that was Hitler or Nazism, which caused the wholesale slaughter of peoples, all the more chilling for its sheer cold-bloodedness. Nothing can compare with it, but you can find parallels with its methodology at least in Ferdinand Marcos's declared martial law and GMA's undeclared one.

Nowhere is the parallel more patent than in the use of scapegoats to justify the regime or indeed advance its cause. Almost inexplicably from the 20-20 vision of hindsight, Hitler managed to drive home the contention to a tired and cynical German public that the Jews and communists were actually conniving to bring down the whole world.

He was, of course, aided in this respect by the brilliantly demented Joseph Goebbels, his minister of propaganda, who unleashed the "Big Lie" theory of information, which said that the bigger the lie, the more likely it was going to be believed. To the end of his days, Hilter maintained that the Jews were behind the communist threat, financing it and even espousing it. A batty notion, but history is full of batty notions and people, which and who produce not very batty consequences.

Marcos, of course, was the original proponent of the "Left-Right" conspiracy in this country, which he advanced to justify martial law. The Left was the communists, whom he depicted as near to overrunning the country in 1972 and was at least fomenting anarchy and strife. The Right was the "oligarchy," given a face in particular by the Lopezes (Eugenio Lopez Sr. obliged unwittingly by holding his 40th wedding anniversary with much opulence, according to news reports, champagne flowing like fountains and some guests lighting cigars with peso bills), who were funding the communists to prevent Marcos from working his reforms. A batty notion from hindsight, but one too with murderous consequences.

Comes now GMA with her own Left-Right conspiracy, which she first articulated when she declared PP 1017. It is a virtual rehash of the martial law justification and little wonder because PP 1017 was meant to be that. The idea was amplified by the government propaganda machine-shades of Goebbels and Greg Cendaña—particularly in the form of the so-called documentary "Sagot sa Kataksilan: 1017," which conjured a conspiracy by communists and rightist military officers, aided by the rich, notably the Cojuangcos who stood to have Hacienda Luisita land-reformed. The lie hasn't sold well, ironically because it still retained a small grain of truth to it, so the GMA regime has gone whole hog and unleashed the Big Lie with the hope it would produce better results.

That Big Lie is that the communists are today's scourge of the land and must be wiped out posthaste.

People have been asking me of late why GMA seems to have the hots for the Reds when they seem largely marginal to today's equation. The reason is simple: She needs a scapegoat, just as Marcos did. And well before them, the way their role model, Hitler, did.

When Marcos trotted out the Reds as a scapegoat, he at least had a few things going for him. Though the Reds were not responsible for the bombings in Greater Manila (as it was called then)—he was, just as GMA probably is, by way of Norberto Gonzales—they had at least become a force to reckon with. And though they were not strong enough to overrun the country at the time, they had at least the potential to do so in time, their numbers swelling like a flood by the day.

None of that is there today. What has laid the communist movement low, as I've always contended, is not the military defeats they have suffered over time, it is the ideological and moral debacles they have suffered along the way. The potential of the movement to grow has been halted since the late 1990s by the Fall of the Wall, a modern metaphor for Humpty Dumpty, whose own fall precluded reconstitution, and the revelation of the "killing fields," both of which dulled the sheen it radiated in the past. If the movement continues to exist today, it is simply because of the hunger and misery of the poor. It is no longer the capacity of the movement to inspire the youth that swells its ranks, it is its capacity to give succor, if not hope, to the desperate.

As Gen. Raymundo Jarque asked in the past and as the Magdalo officers are asking in the present, where is the sense in shooting down people whose only crime is to want to fend off the ravages of poverty and oppression?

The sense, as far as GMA is concerned, is survival. Hitler at least fanatically loathed the Jews and believed till the end of his days they had to be obliterated from the face of the earth as a matter of necessity. The current attempt to wreak a minor holocaust upon the Reds merely reeks of cynicism—like Mt. Everest, they just happen to be there. The public can be counted on not to mind their slaughter. The expected result of all this being to divert attention from the illegitimacy of GMA's rule.

GMA has already tried to show that the scourge of this country is the political system, which can be solved by Cha-Cha, and that hasn't sold. She has already tried to show that the scourge of this country is the Senate, which can be solved by abolishing it, and that hasn't sold. Now she is trying to show that the scourge of this country is the Reds, which can be solved by exterminating them. That too won't sell, even if it will leave a mountain of corpses along the way. For a simple reason:

The public knows who the real scourge of this country is.

Cebu revision should lay legitimacy issue to rest

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

EARLY MORNING LAST WEEK, EN ROUTE TO an early meeting, I heard GMA Network's ace commentator Mike Enriquez discussing over radio with his reporter the latter's report that a second impeachment case against President Macapagal-Arroyo would be filed by the opposition when Congress opens on July 24. The issue is still about alleged poll fraud. Enriquez's immediate reaction was, would the political turmoil that would ensue from such move benefit the country and the economy? I think that's a fair question to ask, but then that's assuming the opposition is primarily seeking the welfare of the country. It seems to be only after ousting GMA by fair or foul means.

* * *

The reaction of GMA's lawyer, Romulo Macalintal, to the report of a second impeachment is worth looking into. He opines that up to now the first impeachment case is not a closed book inasmuch as three opposition House members, led by Cebu Rep. Clavel Martinez, had filed a case seeking temporary injunction from the Supreme Court soon after the House threw the case out last September. Macalintal says that since the Court has not decided on that case, a second impeachment would violate the constitutional bar against two impeachment cases being filed within the same year against the same official. If the opposition files that second case, he says he would challenge it in the light of this unresolved first case. And even if the Court should throw out the first case before July 24, the bar would still apply. It looks like the opposition overlooked this question in its eagerness to get GMA.

* * *

By the way, I wrote many months ago about the revision of ballots in Cebu being conducted by the Presidential Electoral Tribunal that arose from the protest case filed by former Sen. Loren Legarda against Vice President Noli de Castro. At that time, Macalintal, who's the lawyer of both GMA and De Castro, asserted that no significant finding of poll fraud was uncovered in Cebu, where GMA's lead over Fernando Poe Jr. was 1.02 million votes. Macalintal told me that the revision in Cebu was recently finished and the same findings remained the same: no significant fraud. In her petition, Legarda claimed she would gain some 400,000 votes in Cebu alone, but it seems not to have materialized after the PET's 25 revising committees finished their work, although Legarda still claims 60 percent of the results are fraudulent.

At this point, Macalintal is pressing the PET for a "partial determination" of results on the basis of one argument: for the Cebu revision alone Legarda and De Castro had to submit one million documents each. After Cebu, there are still 42 provinces included in Legarda's petition. He argues that if Cebu, which has the biggest number of votes after Metro Manila, did not yield any significant evidence of fraud, why proceed to the other provinces? Macalintal says her case should be thrown out already.

* * *

Macalintal is arguing from the standpoint of practicality. But there's another issue, especially in the light of reports of a second impeachment case being prepared. Results for the two highest officials were drawn from the same ballots recently revised in Cebu, and Macalintal stresses that no significant fraud was unearthed in both cases. If this is so—and the PET is in the best position to knows this—the issue of GMA's legitimacy ought to be laid to rest. If Cebu's 1.02 million votes were found to be generally fraud-free, it stands to reason that GMA's claimed 1.2 million vote margin over FPJ has a stronger basis than the Garci tapes. The latter's authenticity has never been established, and the opposition has admitted that they have been edited and tampered with. Must the economy suffer from renewed political instability over a second impeachment complaint?

* * *

I earlier cited Speaker Jose de Venecia's plea to recent high-ranking Chinese visitors, led by Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai, to help jumpstart the RP economy through investments in such projects as building one million low-cost houses and 75,000 to 100,000 schoolhouses. But his speech at the opening of the First RP-China Economic Partnership Forum last June 5 was interesting also for the picture it painted of China's amazing progress.

JDV noted that China's growth has exceeded even Japan's phenomenal pace half a century ago. Japan doubled its foreign trade over 20 years, while China, between 1980 and 2000, multiplied it five times. In fact, the Speaker noted, some analysts expect China's GDP, estimated by Bloomberg to be worth $2.16 trillion in 2005, will become the world's largest before 2040, surpassing that of the United States. With the recession in other parts of Asia, China has emerged as the region's engine of growth.

* * *

JDV stressed that China's amazing growth is also creating the "greatest mass emancipation from poverty the world has ever seen." He noted that from 1990 to 2002 alone, China has raised 233 million of its people from poverty to middle-class status (although it's widely acknowledged that the vast remote hinterlands of China remain mired in deep poverty). With the rise of an affluent Chinese middle class (mainly along the eastern seaboard and in the south), he noted that even Chinese tourism holds great potentials for RP's economy. About 30,000 Chinese tourists visited RP in 2004, and that jumped to 100,000 in 2005. A projected 87-percent increase in 2006 should jack up that figure close to 200,000, but that represents only a tiny fraction of the Chinese who visit our neighbors, such as Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. Three million Chinese tourists visit the Asean states every year and this is bound to grow rapidly. De Venecia told the Chinese dignitaries that we want to see half a million Chinese tourists here per year.

A glimpse of Russian culture

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT WAS BUT A GLIMPSE OF RUSSIAN CULTURE and arts, snippets of dance and music, but it was enough to rouse one's curiosity and send members of the audience into rapturous appreciation by evening's end.

The Russian Cultural Festival, held from June 14-18 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, was held to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and the Philippines and to celebrate Russian National Day. Wisely, the organizers decided to center the celebration on culture, exhibiting facets of Russian arts, as well as to demonstrate the collaboration between Filipino and Russian artists. The last is exemplified by Ballet Manila, whose founder and director, Lisa Macuja Elizalde, studied ballet in Russia and established a ballet school following the Russian "Vaganova" method of training, with the help of Russian dance masters and mistresses.

So it was only apt that the Gala Night of the Festival last Saturday evening opened with Ballet Manila in "Dancing to Verdi," choreographed by Tony Fabella, and a staple of BM's repertoire.

The number allowed the BM dancers to display their technique and artistry to the hilt, but as always it was Lisa, dancing with new partner Gerardo Francisco, who raised the bar with her exuberance and energy.

Ballet Manila was followed by a pair of pas de deux by Bolshoi Ballet stars Ekaterina Shipulina and Ruslan Skvortsov in "Chopiniana," and Nelli Kobakhidze and Alexander Volchkov in "Giselle." Impeccable in technique, lovely in their lyricism, the "Stars of Bolshoi" made their dancing seem effortless, with smooth lifts and truly breathtaking turns.

Another pair—Anastasia Goryacheva and Andrei Bolotin—mesmerized with their pas de deux of "Tarantella," while a female soloist, who wasn't mentioned in the program, though I think it was Shipulina, capped the ballet numbers with Saint-Saens' "Dying Swan." She impressed with her sensuous arms and liquid leg movements, though I felt she lacked in emotion and dramatization. Still, it was an evening with enough treats for the ballet lover.

* * *

GIVING the local audience a taste of Russian folkloric arts was a group called "The New Names of Moscow Folklore Ensemble," composed of musicians Yulia Neverova, Alexandra Skroznikova, Sergey Yakimov, and Sergey Kotikov playing the balalaika and other traditional stringed instruments and the accordion, and a vocalist, Elena Clebova.

The ensemble, decked out in colorful folk costumes, charmed with traditional and folk melodies, including a "Russian national song" entitled "Valenki."

But the troupe won over their audience with an unexpected encore, when, returning from backstage after their final curtain call, they took their positions once more and started with the opening strains of "Bahay Kubo," as Clebova sang the familiar lyrics. Everyone was delighted, especially by Clebova's utterly heartfelt rendition of what is essentially a local children's ditty. The gesture undoubtedly endeared the ensemble to the audience, their efforts to learn and master a Filipino song much appreciated and enjoyed. With the troupe was art director V. Krouglov, a "People's Artist of Russia," and Ivetta Voronova, president of the New Names Foundation.

* * *

CLIMAX of the Gala Night was pianist Denis Matsuev, dubbed by international music critics as a "rising star" on the world stage, best known for his "classical romantic piano repertoire."

This Matsuev demonstrated ably with Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2," followed by two encore numbers which he played with soulful inspiration, spurred no doubt by the audience's most enthusiastic reception.

Matsuev's artistry and energy was all the more surprising given that, as Susan Macuja confided, he had left Moscow the evening before nursing a 40-degree fever. He was scheduled to perform the next evening with the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and, given the quality of his playing at the Gala Night, I'm sure he more than acquitted himself.

Born in 1975 in Siberia, Matsuev made his mark on the world stage when he won first prize in the 1998 11th International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, which no pianist had won for years. He has since blossomed into a performer of, as one critic noted, "immense charisma and jaw-dropping technique." The charisma was very much in evidence as Matsuev strode to his piano, but the personal charm and gallantry was even more evident as he lost himself in the music and smiled indulgently at the audience at the end of each piece, even the second encore.

Perhaps because Matsuev was not expected to render two more numbers, the gala performance came to an abrupt end when the house lights came on. The audience got the cue, but that didn't stop them from rhapsodizing about the good-looking Matsuev long afterwards!

* * *

INDEED, the evening's performance gave us but a glimpse, tantalizing and intriguing, of the richness of Russian culture. Once subsidized by generous state support, artistic companies like the Bolshoi have of late been forced to adapt to the "free market" system, forced to raise funds by mounting tours while seeking to broaden its repertoire. But as the Bolshoi "stars" show, despite the hard times, the Bolshoi Company and School have not lowered their standards, their rigorous training and fidelity to the classics evident in their performances. There's a lesson here somewhere for our artistic companies and sponsors—including government agencies charged with promotion of the arts. As long as artists like the Bolshoi dancers, the folkloric musicians and the magnificent Matsuev continue to give their heart to their art, a nation's soul is not in danger of being sold out anytime soon.

Will China's capitalist revolution turn democratic

WORLD VIEW

Minxin Pei

COMMUNIST CHINA HAS EXPERIENCED A monumental capitalist revolution in the last two decades, with an economy that is now six times bigger than it was 20 years ago. A minor player in the global economy in the 1980s, China today is the world's third largest trading power. But if these stunning economic statistics make you think that so much capitalist development must also have brought more democracy to China, think again.

Most Westerners believe in a theory of liberal evolution, according to which sustained economic growth, by increasing wealth and the size of the middle class, gradually makes a country more democratic. While the long-run record of this theory is irrefutable, China's authoritarian ruling elite is not only determined to hold on to power, but it also has been smart enough to take adaptive measures aimed at countering the liberalizing effects of economic development.

Thus, for all its awe-inspiring economic achievement, China has made remarkably little progress in political liberalization. Indeed, judging by several key indicators, progress toward democracy in China has stalled, despite unprecedented economic prosperity and personal freedom.

For instance, in the mid-1980s, Chinese leaders seriously discussed and later drew up a blueprint for modest democratic reforms. Today, the topic of political reform is taboo. Nearly all the major institutional reforms, such as strengthening the legislature, holding village elections, and building a modern legal system, were launched in the 1980s. Since the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 1989, however, not a single major democratic reform initiative has been implemented.

Instead of democratic transition, China has witnessed a consolidation of authoritarian rule - the strengthening of a one-party regime through organizational learning and adaptation. Since 1989, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been pursuing a two-pronged strategy: selective repression that targets organized political opposition and cooptation of new social elites (the intelligentsia, professionals, and private entrepreneurs).

This strategy emphasizes the maintenance of an extensive law enforcement apparatus designed to eliminate any incipient organized opposition. Huge investments have strengthened the People's Armed Police (PAP), a large anti-riot paramilitary force whose specialty is the quick suppression of anti-government protests by disgruntled industrial workers, peasants, and urban residents. Frequent deployment of the PAP is a major reason why the tens of thousands of collective protests that occur each year (74,000 in 2004 and 86,000 in 2005) have had a negligible impact on China's overall stability.

To deal with new emerging political threats, such as the information revolution, the Chinese government has spent mightily on manpower and technology. A special 30,000-strong police unit monitors and screens Internet traffic, advanced technology is deployed to block access to overseas websites considered "hostile or harmful," and Internet service and content providers, both domestic and Western, must comply with onerous restrictions designed to suppress political dissent and track down offenders. The regime has even conducted multi-agency exercises to test whether different government bodies could cooperate closely to keep "harmful information" off the Net during an emergency.

Having learned from the collapse of the Soviet Union that a bureaucratic ruling party must coopt new social elites to deprive potential opposition groups of leaders, the Communist Party has conducted an effective campaign of expanding its social base. The urban intelligentsia and professionals have been pampered with material perks and political recognition, while new private entrepreneurs have been allowed to join the Party.

This strategy of pre-emptive political decapitation has produced enormous dividends for the party. In the 1980s, its principal adversaries were the urban intelligentsia, who constituted the backbone of the pro-democracy movement that culminated in Tiananmen Square. Today, the mainstream of the Chinese intelligentsia is an integral part of the ruling elite. Many have joined the Party and become government officials, and a large percentage enjoy various professional and financial privileges.

Predictably, the intelligentsia, usually the most liberal social group, is no longer a lethal threat to party rule. Worse, without support from this strategic group, other social groups, such as workers and peasants, have become politically marginalized and rudderless.

Although the party's carrot-and-stick approach has worked since 1989, it is doubtful that it will retain its efficacy for another 17 years. To the extent that China's authoritarian regime is by nature exclusionary (it can only incorporate a limited number of elites), the co-optation strategy will soon run up against its limits, and the party will no longer have the resources to buy off the intelligentsia or keep private entrepreneurs happy.

At the same time, selective repression can contain social frustrations and discontent only temporarily. As long as much of Chinese society views the current political system as unjust, unresponsive, and corrupt, there will always be a large reservoir of ill will toward the ruling elites.

When things go wrong—as is likely, given mounting social strains caused by rising inequality, environmental degradation, and deteriorating public services—China's alienated masses could become politically radicalized. And, unlike past protests, which have usually been allied with students or members of the intelligentsia, popular disaffection might not have the virtue of rational leaders with whom the government could talk and negotiate.

So it may be premature for the party to celebrate the success of its adaptive strategy. China's rulers may have stalled democratic trends for now, but the current strategy has, perhaps, merely delayed the inevitable. *Project Syndicate*

Minxin Pei is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and author of China's Trapped Transition.

Wrestling with God

YOUNG BLOOD

Anton Dominic A. Magbanua

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

MY LIFE, I BELIEVE, IS A WRESTLING MATCH WITH GOD.

I like to think of myself as Jacob who wrestled with an angel of the Lord before reckoning with Esau and his past. I do not know if God will allow me to overcome Him. But one thing is certain: I will not let go of Him until He blesses me.

I have a vivid memory. I can recall almost everything in my past. I specially love to recall the years when my life revolved around playing games and being cuddled by my mother. But despite all the pictures I have stored in the photo album of my mind, I cannot pinpoint the moment I lost my innocence.

I have learned that innocence does not break as suddenly as a glass shatters. Rather, the process is gradual and innocence is removed layer by layer by every event in our life. Then suddenly it dawns upon us that we are naked and vulnerable to the harsh realities of the world.

It is really sad when, devoid of innocence, we come to know that life is more than who we are.

Without my innocence now, after 19 years of living, I know I am wrestling with God. I wrestle with Him because I believe that what my life is going to be I must choose, not accept. God has given me my share of trials, and I accept the tragedies and the sufferings. But I will choose how my life will go and my choice will not be dictated by any event that has happened or may yet happen.

God has been generous to me with His blessings and trials. During my grade-school years, my father, who was drunk every night, often hurt my mother physically. Our house was foreclosed by the bank and my mother lost everything she had because my father insisted on doing what he pleased with her property. Then my sister, the eldest of us three siblings, got pregnant at 19.

I used to ask God what sins we had committed. If He was teaching us lessons, I said, why did He have to be so hard and cruel. I cannot describe the trauma I suffered during those times. Most of all, I pitied my mother who is closest to my heart.

There were the times when I thought God was evil. I read the Bible and it struck me that God did not tell Moses that He was a good God. All that He said was, "I am." My mother was a very religious person and I did not share my doubts with her lest she reproach me.

I am now in my third year college, and looking back, I realize that all the events in my life are not random happenings. It seems that there is an Invisible Hand that arranges all the events like pieces in a puzzle. When tragedy strikes and things look hopeless, something happens to right the wrongs. But the saving event only solves the problem in part, and the rest depends on us.

My older sister gave birth to girl whom my parents adopted. My parents then sent her to one school after another, but she never finished a course because she eloped with another guy and then just dropped out.

When I was in fifth grade, my mother left for the United States and worked as much as her weary body allowed. After six years, she was able to redeem our house.

But those six years were the hardest and saddest years of my life. I had to deal with the other members of our family, whose principles did not match my own. I cried every night for my mama to be back. During those years, my sister used the assets my mother had acquired with her saving to get a loan. When my mother came home my sister just disappeared. After six years, my father and my sister had nothing to show for the money she had been sending over. But my mother accepted this fate with resignation.

My father still gets drunk every night but I do not allow him to hurt my mother anymore. Sometimes I wonder how she can put up with him. I know she pities him. She knows that if she throws him out of our house, he would have nowhere to go. We have to bear with him when his behavior becomes obnoxious. Sometimes I have to swallow my anger when I see him carrying bottles of beer, knowing it is mother's earnings that keep our souls and bodies together.

From all these events of my life, I can see that God merely gives us the blocks to build our lives. What we make of our lives depends on us.

From everything that has happened in my life, I have come to believe that God is telling me: "Why cling to an existence that is filled with sufferings and short of joys?"

I have known people who merely accept their fate. They are the cowards who cannot cope with changes because all they want is the life they have grown accustomed to. They do not see their true possibilities because they are afraid that they may not be capable of overcoming the trials that come their way.

But then there is the example of my mother who has suffered and endured so much and yet still managed to save us from poverty. I think she challenged her fate and the fate of her family. She did not accept it, she chose to change it and mold it according to her own design.

That is how I want to live my personal legend. I want to choose what I will make of God's gifts and trials. I believe that by choosing, I will be able to forget a past that disappoints and that pains by looking back at the things that I have achieved to give me strength to carry on.

I finished high school with honors for both my academics and extracurricular activities. I strived hard even if I knew that when I received my medals, my mother would not be around to share the joy with me. I did not allow my depression and my loneliness to get in the way of the goals I set for myself. These were the times when I almost forgot God and I merely depended on my personal strengths. But I know that He never forgot me.

I wrestled with my God and will continue to do so. Because no matter what He sends me, I will determine my own fate and the fate of my loved ones. Free will, after all, is the best gift He has given to His children. But I pray that He will smile at me and bless me.

Anton Dominic A. Magbanua, 19, is a 3rd year nursing student at the University of St. La Salle Bacolod.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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Filipino legacies in Nepal before the Everest conquest

THE PHILIPPINES WAS AGOG AND OVERflowing with pride last month with the conquest of Everest by Leo Oracion, Erwin Emata and Romi Garduce. But few Filipinos knew that the airplanes that brought the Filipino mountain climbers to Kathmandu, Nepal, landed on an airport built by Filipinos more than 15 years ago. Yes, the runways, taxiways, parking aprons, access roads and most of the ground facilities of the King Tribhuvan International Airport were built by Philrock Inc., then the largest Filipino contractor for civil works and now a division of EEI Corp.

Filipino engineers and skilled technicians labored in the cold and harsh environment, under the shadows of the Himalayan Ranges, to open a portal into the once reclusive kingdom—the birthplace of Buddha, the land of the Abominable Snowman called Yeti and the home of the fabled Shangrila.

Not only that. There is one lasting legacy that the Filipinos share with the people of Nepal. It is known only to those who, like us, were fortunate to be there during those historic moments.

On that cold, windy Saturday morning when we turned over the newly completed airport to then His Majesty King Birindra Bir Bikram, on Feb. 17, 1990, the ceremonies were shortened by a People Power Revolution, which confirmed the week-long rumors that the people would rise against the corrupt monarchial government. After a very short speech on the ceremonial ground fronting the new airport terminal building, the King in his limousine, escorted by horse-mounted policemen and a truckload of Gurkhas, rushed back to the military-fortified Palace. There were talks that the marchers intended to trap the King in the airport or on the road.

On our way back to the Philippine Compound at Tripureswar Road, we met the horde of people marching and carrying banners of all sorts and long wooden poles that they thumped on the road as they shouted slogans in anger, and blocked the road and everything in their path. It was the first time that the once meek, humble and poor people of Nepal rose against their king. But the most astounding sight for me, a Filipino, was the people of a different race wearing yellow ribbons, waving yellow banners, some of them flashing the L sign of Laban, and shouting Cory! Cory! Cory!

The People Power Revolution which started that fateful day in Nepal turned bloody and rages still to this day—and may go on for years until the people truly achieve their goals and win. Sad to say, People Power here in the Philippines, its birthplace, has died in the cold, numbing apathy of the Filipino people.

—ABDON M. BALDE JR.,
18 Dao St. Casimiro Village, Las Piñas City.

Who's out to sabotage PCGG?

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE NEWS REport "Somebody out to sabotage PCGG, says Abcede." (PDI, 6/12/06)

Ricardo Abcede's claim is absurd because he and his boss Camilo Sabio are already doing that. Their insistence on striking a compromise deal with the heirs and cronies of Ferdinand Marcos, who plundered our country and deprived millions of people of decent life, is unacceptable. Their twisted sense of justice demeans the Office of the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

The gains made by the coconut farmers during the time of Haydee Yorac as PCGG chairperson are now in jeopardy because the current PCGG leadership, under Sabio and Abcede, is doing everything to prevent the execution of the Sandiganbayan rulings on the cases.

The Office of the Solicitor General has filed two motions for execution for the partial summary judgments rendered on the cases of the United Coconut Planters Bank and the Coconut Industry Investment Fund Block in San Miguel Corporation (CIIF-SMC). This will enable government to finally liquefy the shares and use the proceeds for the benefit of the coconut industry and its farmers. The CIIF-SMC block alone is estimated to be worth P50 billion. With the recent "discovery" of the coconut's market potentials and "value-added uses" (e.g., virgin coco oil, biodiesel, coco fiber nets), the coco levy funds, if prudently managed, could very well help the ailing coconut industry and its impoverished farmers.

But the present PCGG has taken a new tack—it has become so aggressive in negotiating a compromise deal that will cover all the cases involving the ill-gotten wealth of Marcos and his cronies.

In the case of the coco levy funds, the scenario is twice as worse because the courts have already rendered decisions favoring the government and the coconut farmers. In short, Sabio's PCGG, which is directly under the Office of the President, after winning a number of major cases, is offering to strike a deal with Marcos crony Eduardo Cojuangco.

I urge the PCGG officials to pursue true justice and to adhere to the reason of its being. They should listen to and imitate the likes of Jovito Salonga, Simeon Marcelo and Haydee Yorac. If not, they should all resign from their post because they only bring shame and injustice to the people they have committed to serve.

I also urge the Sandiganbayan to decide on the cases once and for all so that justice will be truly served to the millions of coconut farmers. Immediate resolution of the cases will prevent unscrupulous individuals from devising schemes that will benefit their selfish interests and those of their masters.

—Liza C. Condino,
Program officer 2, Coconut Industry Reform (COIR), Movement, Inc., 84 Masikap Ext., Brgy. Central, Diliman, Quezon City

Call center industry: the graduates only hope?

I AM REALLY WORried about the analysis made by the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP). (Infotech Section, PDI, 6/12/06)

Is the call center industry all that our graduates can hope to work for in the Philippines?

"CCAP reported that of the 400,000 Filipino college graduates per year, only 100,000 are immediately employable. Of this 100,000 only 12,000 could pass requirements to work as contact center agents. This is still well below the 60,000 minimum needed by the call center industry."

Besides, who are the target clients of these call centers? Aren't they mostly Filipinos who are based overseas? Are the hiring managers themselves really English-proficient? What kind of English do they require? What level of English proficiency is necessary for the graduates to be accepted? With these unclear parameters, why is it that English proficiency of college graduates is given too much weight or made a requirement for their entry into the call center industry? Does this industry really help improve the economy of the country?

—TONETTE BINSOL,
www.tpmovers.org

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BRAZIL plays in their opening round of Group F at the World Cup football match at Germany.

The beautiful game live on TV for Filipinos

THE WORLD CUP IS UPON US AGAIN. THIS quadrennial single sporting event rivals the Olympics. It is embraced by billions of spectators around the globe.

Conflicts sometimes stop because of this event, business comes to a halt in all of Europe and South America. But it is saddening that we Filipinos have yet to realize that this is the sport suited for us.

This sport does not require stratospheric height or heavy brawn. I am not saying that it is a sport for midgets, but our height and build is really suited for this game. We are crazy about basketball and yet we don't even have a national team that can compete with a winning chance in international games like the Olympiad. I envy our Asian neighbors for they have teams in the ongoing World Cup where I think we can fare better.

Fortunately, the media can help in "exposing" our people to what Pelé calls "the beautiful game." Unfortunately, some people in the media are denying the masses the opportunity to watch the World Cup live, by showing the games a day or so after they are played.

In 1994, 1998 and 2002, I watched the World Cup on Sky Cable, specifically on channels NHK and Television Española and on Thai stations. I hope that Sky Cable, along with all the local channels, will air live the games in the next World Cup in 2010, so that the young people can watch it and develop a love for the beautiful game.

I am calling the attention of all concerned, especially politicians, sports officials and the people behind the National Telecommunications Commission to make the necessary steps to bring about a live, full media coverage of the next World Cup.

—CIRILO PHILIP ALBERT C. DORONILA,
pepperurut@yahoo.com

Is PSALM acting right on YNN's Masinloc bid?

WE WOULD LIKE TO ADD OUR VOICE TO the chorus of comments made on the YNN bid for the Masinloc power plant. The different views aired in the media have definitely brought to the fore the need for Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) to fast-track the privatization of the National Power Corp., this being one of the preconditions to the implementation of open access and retail competition.

The National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms (Nasecore) supports Napocor's privatization as a means to allow competition and arrest the soaring cost of power in the country. However, we do not want any form of irregularity to taint the process. Right after the first article on this controversy came out, we wrote PSALM, requesting a copy of the bidding guidelines for us to determine whether it indeed violated its own rules to favor YNN. We are still awaiting its reply.

But what bothers us even more is the manifestly well-organized campaign to force PSALM to veer away from its liberal position on the issue, have YNN's contract forfeited, and drive away prospective investors, like the Malaysian firm Ranhill Power Berhad. We do not object to this kind of campaign for as long as it is meant to promote the common good, the interest of electricity consumers, in particular.

Ranhill has been mentioned and reported ready to provide the financial package required of YNN's Masinloc bid. From the Internet, we have gathered that Ranhill is a multifaceted organization that has contributed significantly to the building of a new Malaysia. PSALM may be right in giving YNN-Ranhill until June 30, 2006, the second deadline, to deliver the required upfront bid payment of $227 million. After all, YNN's bid was the biggest and, as observers are saying, will be hard to duplicate in another bidding held around this time.

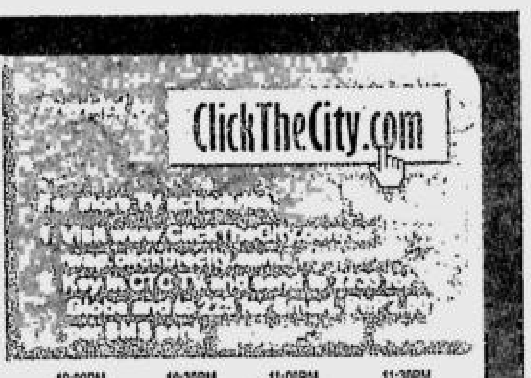
But this is not to say that our legislators should not conduct their own investigations so the public may be protected, somehow, if indeed there is an anomaly here.

—PETE L. ILAGAN, president, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms, Parañaque City
nasecore2003@yahoo.com,

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Kaya nila...
Ikaw kaya,
kaya mo?
ULTIMATE GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS
Tuesday 8:30 PM
ABC
Iba Tayo!



Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	V League				Sentro	World's Most Amazing Videos	TNA Impact		Ultimate Guinness World Records		Big News	ALI			
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning	Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	Wonderful Life	Nagmamahal, Kapamilya			Insider
AXN		Lost (Season II)		House		Sports Disaster V		Beastmaster (Season II)		Andromeda (Season V)		The World's Most Extreme Rides		Alias (Season IV)		CSI: NY (Season 2)		Rescue Me (Season II)	
Cartoon Network	Police Academy	Richie Rich	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy Double Episode		The Simpsons - Double Episodes		Power Rangers Ninja Storm	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny	The Simpsons		Mucha Lucha!	Duck Dodgers	Justice League	Samurai Jack
Cinema One		Double Cross				All My Life				Kabilin-bilinan Ni Lola				D' Anothers				Markova: Comfort Gay	
Cinemax			Zulu (3:20 PM)				Zulu (5:45 PM)					The 51st State			7 Seconds			[illegible] (Movie)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Body Of Evidence	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Surface		E-Ring		Law & Order: Criminal Intent	
Discovery Channel		I Shouldn't Be Alive		Rides		Supersystems Of The Ancient World		Unsolved History		Wild Discovery		Hour Asia		The Greatest Ever		Unsolved History		Crime Stories	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Mickey Mouseworks	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Wicked Science Yr. 2	Phil Of The Future	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN	Dubai X Games - Day 1	15th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup			15th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup Highlights	15th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup			2006 LPGA Pro Tour C'ships		Sportscenter Germany	Germany Tonight	Dubai X Games - Day 1	U.S. Open Golf C'ship		Sportscenter Asia	2006 NBA Finals: Dallas vs Miami		
ETC	Insider Weekend	Project Runway		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		One Tree Hill 3		The O.C.3		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Blowout 2		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Super Saints	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	ABCatholic	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Mirror Of The Soul	Lord, Have Mercy	Behold the Man Spirituality for Men	The Journey Home Encore		Daily Mass Live		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	The Good Code The Natural Law	Chaplet Of Divine Mercy	Octavia Dies	Web Of Faith	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat (2:45 PM)	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Endless Love 1: Autumn In My Heart By Popular Demand		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Gokusen	24 Oras		Captain Barbell	Majika	I Luv NY	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Jewel In The Palace		Bahay Mo Ba 'To			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		McLeod's Daughters V		The Prince And The Pauper				Bewitched	The Nanny	Judging Amy		Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye III		Judging Amy		Annie's Point			Judging Amy (11:45PM)
HBO				Beethoven's 2nd			A Simple Wish			The River Wild (7:10 PM)				Carnivale 15 Ingram TX		Carnivale 16 Old Cherry Blossom Road (10:50PM)	Absolute Power (10:45PM)		
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Sorcerer Hunter	Soul Hunters	Lost Universe	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mama da Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Sorcerer Hunter
IBC 13		EZ Shop				[illegible] On The Go	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Global Family Songs		ME TV		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics Asia	Global Family Songs	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Raw				The Batman	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Comedy Central Presents	South Park	The Man Show
Lifestyle Network	Designer Remix	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	At Home With	Emeril Live		Boy Meets Grill	E! News Weekend		Look For Less	Martha		Napa Style	[illegible] Designer Living	Guess Who's Coming To [illegible]	
MTV Philippines		Pimp My Ride		Handpicked: Kala	MTV Hits (with SMS)					Get Spotted	MTV Hits	MTV Off the Beaten Track	MTV Hits	TRL		Pimp My Ride		Sessions: Kala	Jams
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX Versions	MYX Fiesta	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top 10		Top Of The Pops	Radio MYX	MYX News	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	National Geographic Specials		Marine Machines		Money Machines	Wildlife Diary	Top 5 - World Cup Goals	Top 5 - Amazing Moments	WOW! Red Hot Crazy Ants		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation: Bomb On Board		Hunter Hunted: Victims of Venom	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Asia			Dyos Ko, Mahal Ko Ba Siya	Teleradyo W/ [illegible] Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob [illegible] Right On Top	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Nick Kicks		The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Juan N Ted - Wanted				All The Way				Hustler				Mga mo. Mata				Alamid Ang Alamat
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		[illegible]	Kaleido Star	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Magic Ring	Irene	Noel	Project 11	Family Zoo		News On Q	Sana Muling [illegible]		Irene	Over The Green Fields
RPN 9						Global Window	RPN Arangkada News	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Boarding House [illegible]		Australia's Next Top Model		Paradise Hotel		Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Thrill		
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping		Sony Music Video		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kasaganaan		SBN Music Video			
Solar Sports					Volleyball 2006 [illegible]				Phil. Mtn Bk Pro Tour 3	NBA Jam	Boxing: Jermain Taylor vs Winky Wright						Solar Sports Desk	World Tennis [illegible]	
Sports Plus				FIFA World Cup 06: [illegible] Switzerland						Kopi Tunervision	Rookie Manual	Ultimate Fighting Championship				FIFA World Cup 06: Costa Rica vs Poland			
Star Movies			Fatal Error (3:45 PM)			D2: The Mighty Ducks (5:10PM)				The Bridge Of San Luis Rey				Twisted			Die Another Day (10:40PM)		
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Ed		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Charmed: Life As We Know It		The O.C.		North Shore/ Kevin Hill		Seinfeld	Charmed: Life As We Know It
Studio 23	Bewitched	Naruto				Batman Beyond	Monkey Typhoon	Spirits	Pinoy Big Brother	Wazzup Wazzup	Andromeda		Smallville (8:20 PM)	Gilmore Girls (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Reality World

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2006
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
A13

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Bulusan folk moved; danger zone widened

ARMY TROOPERS HELPED EVACUATE ABOUT 450 residents from the restive Mount Bulusan after the volcano spewed ash and gravel in a new explosion over the weekend, officials said Monday.

Scientists said they needed to gather more details and possibly conduct another aerial survey of Bulusan's summit—the second in a week—before they can assess prospects of a major eruption.

Renato Solidum, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, said Sunday's explosion belched ash up to two kilometers into the sky, accompanied by a number of mild tremors. No one was hurt and the volcano was reported quiet on Monday, officials said.

Local disaster relief official Noel Pura said about 350 residents were ferried by military trucks and government vehicles from villages close to the volcano in Juban and Irosin towns, 390 km southeast of Manila, to evacuation centers about 5 km away.

Mayor Edwin Hamor of nearby Casiguran town said another 100 villagers living near the slopes of the volcano moved to a high school, but that most of the men stayed behind to guard their homes and farms.

Authorities estimated more than 20,000 people face a possible evacuation in case of a major eruption, and set out plans for erecting tent cities outside a 6-km radius of the volcano.

Hamor said rains on Sunday night increased the danger of ash and debris falling from the volcano, prompting the evacuation of residents, who did not resist the move.

Bulusan's recent ash and gas ejections indicated molten rocks called magma may be moving up within the volcano, but it wasn't clear whether it would lead to a major eruption, Solidum said.

Last eruption

Its last major eruption was in 1994.

The Phivolcs advised local officials to expand to 5 km the radius of the danger zone.

Ernesto Corpuz, chief of volcano monitoring and eruption prediction division, said with the onset of the rainy season, residents face two grave dangers—ashfall and lahar flow.

Corpuz issued the advice as evacuation was ongoing in the towns of Juban and Casiguran.

As the rainy season progresses, the accumulated loose volcanic material, whether old or new, would be eroded, move and mix with rainwater which could form into hazardous lahar and torrential flows. *Bobby Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; with AP reports*

WOMEN carry their children as evacuation starts around the Bulusan volcano.
NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

SOLDIERS patrol an area near the danger zone around Bulusan volcano during evacuation of residents too close for comfort to the volcano.
PHOTOS BY NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

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Sorsogon LGUs' fate uncertain in case of major eruption

SORSOGON CITY—WITH NO EXACT DATE for the big explosion, which the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said could be within a few months to a few years, local government units (LGUs) here face uncertainty in coping with the growing needs of disaster management for a long period.

Mayor Edwin Hamor of Casiguran said that as of yesterday, with the current resources they have—which included a calamity fund of P1.4 million, the LGU could only sustain for 15 days evacuees and the operation of response management.

But Hamor was optimistic that they could manage to overcome the challenges of the disaster response capabilities of the LGU in their town with donations from several agencies and institutions pouring in.

He said they have not yet spent a single centavo from the calamity fund because of the donations that came in earlier.

Hamor said they needed food, medicines and other donations that are relevant to the needs of the evacuees. He said clothes are last in the list of the town's wish list.

Yesterday, 41 families were taken in here from the village of Inlagadian. The city government had to start spending for their daily food in the evacuation centers.

Disaster plans

The INQUIRER obtained a disaster preparedness plan that details the specific actions and persons responsible in the event of major eruption.

In Juban town, Mayor Marites Guab-Fragata revealed that they have only P1.2 million and that they would spend not only for the food of the evacuees but also for operational expenses like gasoline.

Guab-Fragata said they have already agreed on the details of the specific response plan of the town with two of its villages within the danger zone.

Sixty-six families are already housed in evacuation centers comprising 302 individuals.

In case of a major eruption, the Juban LGU has to feed at least 2,454 individuals from the two villages in the danger zone areas and they need at least P450 per family a day to feed the evacuees housed in schools.

She said the town started spending from the calamity fund yesterday and acknowledged the help of the provincial government and the Department of Social Welfare and Development for the provisions given them.

The Municipal Agriculture Office here has estimated that the March 21 ash explosion had damaged some P13 million worth of bananas, coconuts and other crops and that another P2.6 million was damaged as of yesterday.

Guab-Fragata said the LGU has no specific disaster response plan for Mt. Bulusan's eruption but prepared a general plan for the town covering only typhoons and floods.

Exaggeration

But Manuel Olondres Jr., former mayor of Juban, Sorsogon, said media and some local officials were actually exaggerating the situation, which created fear and panic among the residents in their town.

"The things that we are experiencing now is not yet life threatening and if you watch the television and read the papers it looked as if it was the end-of-the-world situation when in fact it was not," Olondres said.

He said his brothers and sisters in Manila had been calling him the whole day on Sunday worrying about them because of the reports in the media.

Olondres added that he observed that some politicians might be using the volcanic activity to spend the calamity fund and generate financial resources.

But Guab-Fragata, the political nemesis of Olondres, said she was more interested in saving the calamity fund as much as possible so that it would be added to next year's municipal budget.

She said she was only forced to announce the declaration of calamity, which was passed by the town council on March 22, because of the explosion that happened on June 13.

Guab-Fragata said the state of calamity was originally declared so that the LGU employees could avail themselves of calamity loans for their families.

In Irosin town, the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council here yesterday was also detailing the response plan of their municipality in case the situation worsens. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

LIFE goes on at a normal pace for this farmer near the Bulusan volcano.

Nutritional aid for stroke patients, sufferers of Parkinson's disease

There's more to the rehabilitation of stroke patients and the management of Parkinson's disease than the apparent. Often, impaired motor skills affect the patient's ability to swallow, giving rise to a condition known as dysphagia.

One of the ways to help the patient swallow his food is by increasing the thickness of consistency of his food. For years, caregivers used honey or gelatin to do this.

Now Fresenius Kabi, the leader of infusion therapy and clinical nutrition in Europe, has introduced Thick & Easy in the Philippines. Thick & Easy is a starch-based thickener that, when added to food and drinks, results in a dense, cohesive consistency that allows patients to swallow their food.

Simple to use, Thick & Easy blends quickly and smoothly. It stops thickening after one minute, allowing the food to retain a uniform consistency. Food can also be frozen, thawed and re-heated.

With Thick & Easy, food can be prepared in bulk and can be used in standardized menu. It also has a shelf life of three years. This make Thick & Easy time-saving and cost-effective.

Versatility is another key quality of Thick & Easy. It has no taste and can be mixed to achieve a wide range of consistencies---from syrup to pudding-like. It can also be used as a soaking solution for biscuits and breads so dysphagic patients can easily feed themselves and partake in a variety of food. Thick & Easy can also be used with a wide range of hot or cold food and drinks, in addition to creating varied, appealing and appetizing meals.

Best of all, Thick & Easy releases 98% of the available fluids in food-which helps prevent dehydration among patients. It also minimizes the risk of the food being misdirected to the lungs which may cause aspiration pneumonia, a potentially fatal condition.

Among those who are also likely to benefit from Thick & Easy are dysphagic patients whose condition results from motor neuron diseases, cerebral palsy, head injuries and surgeries to the head and neck.

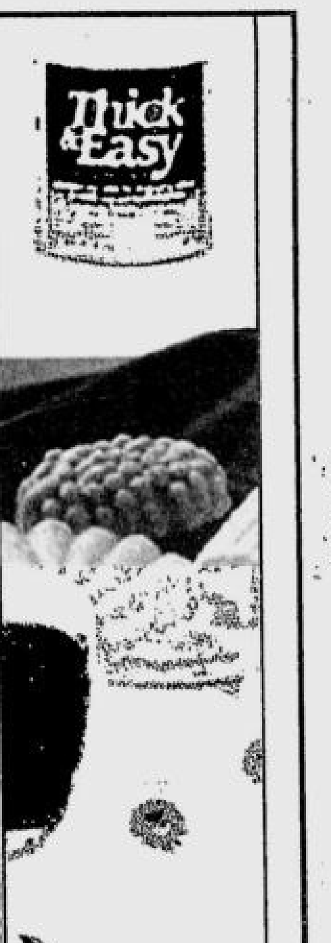
It is best to ask a doctor directly if a patient suffers from dysphagia. According to a 1998 study, only 2% of dysphagic patients in long-term care are identified with the condition. Dr. Reynaldo R. Rey-Matias, a physical and rehabilitation specialist from St. Luke's Medical Center, also said that nearly half of all stroke patients suffer from an inability to swallow.

Before the availability of Thick & Easy in the market, dysphagic patients had no choice but to tolerate pureed foods that often appear formless and unappetizing. Pureeing may also result in the separation of water and food pulp, producing a mixture of consistencies. Patients have a hard time controlling food with varied consistencies. Also, a limited range of foods are suitable for conventional pureed meals.

More than being a conventional nutritional aid, Thick & Easy improves the quality of life of both the patient and the caregiver by allowing the patient the dignity of appetizing meals and making it easy for the caregiver to prepare nutritious meals for the consumers.

Thick & Easy is available at selected Mercury Drugstores. For inquiries on the product, call Fresenius Kabi at 8096492 loc.123.

Note: Moulds are available for *FREE* from Fresenius Kabi to make an appetizing meal for everyone.



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Caring for Life

Bacolod bishop says Cha-cha a manipulation

BACOLOD CITY—BACOLOD Bishop Vicente Navarra on Sunday said the Roman Catholic Church would continue its information campaign against Charter change, as those pushing for Cha-cha do not have support of the majority of the people.

Navarra was reacting to the statement of Speaker Jose de Venecia last week that the people's initiative for Charter change had overwhelming support.

"The people know that it is all because of manipulation," said the bishop, referring to De Venecia's claim that there was overwhelming support to the people's initiative based on the numbers of signature gathered.

He said the people's initiative being undertaken to attain change was "fraudulent" and intended to prolong the power of "generally corrupt incumbent politicians and officials."

"It is also designed to remove the nationalistic and patriotic provisions of the Constitution," he said.

Early this month, Navarra led the faithful in an anti-Cha-cha caravan throughout the Diocese of Bacolod in Negros Occidental. He also led a rally at the Bacolod public plaza on June 12 to enjoin the people to oppose Cha-cha.

De Venecia said on Friday that the country needed to amend the Charter to move ahead economically like other nations with parliamentary forms of government.

He said he was optimistic that the country would have a unicameral parliamentary form of government in place by the end of the year.

De Venecia also said he was 98 percent sure that Charter change would take place this year, leaving a two percent possibility of a Supreme Court negative vote in case the people's initiative was questioned by those opposed to it.

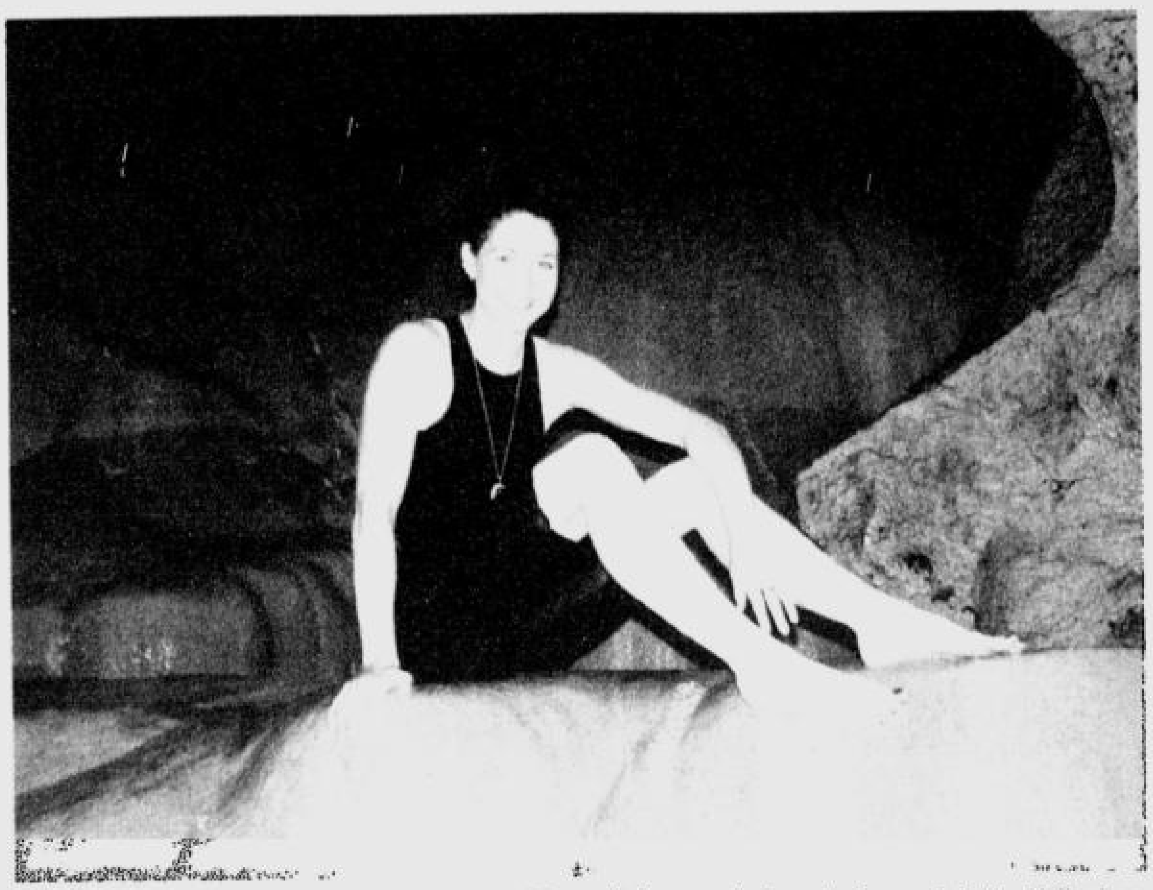
Navarra said lawyers around the country opposed to the people's initiative for Charter change now are preparing to question it before the Supreme Court.

President Macapagal-Arroyo expressed full support for Charter change, saying the day of reckoning is near for those pushing for constitutional amendments and those opposing it.

Ms Arroyo's push for the amendments went into full gear following her ordeal with a failed impeachment case that was filed over charges that she stole the 2004 elections and committed fraud to cover it up.

The President also survived attempts to unseat her following the resignation of nine of her Cabinet members who said she was incapable of governing because she was too preoccupied with staying in power. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Aussie swim champ in RP for ecology protection



OLYMPIC swimming champion Giaan Rooney of Australia in a cave in Sagada. Rooney is in the Philippines to promote environment protection programs. VINCENT CABREZA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

BAGUIO CITY—GUESS WHO came to Cordillera to promote awareness on the protection of the environment?

Olympic swimming champion Giaan Rooney of Australia visited the tourist town of Sagada, Mt. Province, to support community programs that protect the environment.

Former Mayor Thomas Killip, now presidential assistant for Cordillera affairs, said Rooney's visit would surely help generate interest and support for community-based projects of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines (ECP). These projects range from tree planting to micro-hydro power generation.

It was the first time that the 25-year-old Rooney visited the Philippines.

According to Killip, Rooney was impressed with the breadth of community work of the Episcopal Church that she expressed willingness to come back to continue her advocacy of protecting the environment.

"Based on our observation, we think that she will be able to draw attention and interest back in her country for whatever causes we have in the Cordillera on environment and even projects on antipoverty," Killip said.

Fr. Jerry Sagayo, pastoral priest of the St. Mary's Church in Sagada, said Rooney would also promote the protection of the water system when she goes back to Australia.

"She is also into the preservation of environmental heritage, so it was significant that she toured Sagada and went to see the caves, the lakes and the water system of the community," Sagayo said.

Killip said Rooney was tapped for the campaign because she could be a very good ambassador of goodwill. Her visit to other communities in the Philippines could inspire other athletes to follow her lead in promoting issues such as environment, he said.

Aside from Sagada, Rooney also visited the rural communities in Barangay San Jose in Flora, Apayao, and Barangay Tocucan in Bontoc, Mt. Province, where the ECP has implemented integrated development projects under its community-based development program.

Rooney burst into the international scene at 15 when she won the gold in the 100-m backstroke of the 1998 Commonwealth Games.

She was a member of Australia's 4 x 100-m medley relay team that won the gold in the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Experts asked to compute Cordillera water pricing

BAGUIO CITY—ECONOMISTS in the Cordillera have asked local university experts to compute the premium value of water flowing from the mountains down to the lowlands, which will be charged against industries that use the resource, like power and mining.

By putting a price tag on water harnessed by the Cordillera's watersheds, regional developers are hoping to increase the economic advantage of the region now that the government is organizing "super regions," said Leon Dacanay, deputy regional director of the National Economic Development Authority.

Dacanay said the regional development council (RDC) has agreed to apply an independent and scientifically backed valuation of water in future transactions with investors on behalf of indigenous communities.

He said they have initially asked the University of the Philippines Baguio's Cordillera Studies Center to begin the computations.

"We should undertake economic diplomacy. Everything we do must be revenue generating because once you are empowered, you can do anything," he said.

Dacanay said water that powers hydroelectric dams or irrigates lowland farmlands are industries that will immediately feel the impact of a new price scheme.

He said the RDC has endorsed this request to Malacañang because the government relies on a uniform standard for valuing national resources.

Regional economists, he said, are convinced that these standards have kept the region at a disadvantage.

The Cordillera is composed of provinces that were carved out of the Ilocos and Cagayan Valley regions to comply with a ceasefire agreement between slain rebel priest Conrado Balweg and former President Corazon Aquino in 1987.

Dacanay said most of the Cordillera provinces remain among the 50 poorest provinces in the country based on a series of studies comparing growth to a community's income.

A 2003 survey that measures expenditures only lists Mt. Province among the country's 10 poorest provinces, although Mt. Province and Ifugao are also among the lowest performers in a list that measures income.

Dacanay said part of the culprit could be the region's continued reliance on national government support.

He said putting a price on water could help subsidize the mountain communities' "financial autonomy." *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Catanduanes road half complete

VIRAC, CATANDUANES—With less than a year before its scheduled completion, the multimillion-peso Catanduanes Circumferential Road Improvement Project is now 55 percent completed, according to its main contractor, the China Road and Bridge Corp. The National Economic and Development Authority Regional Project Monitoring Committee visited the province recently to verify the contractor's claim that as of May 25, the construction phase for Contract Package I is 55.4 percent complete, or 13.4 percent ahead of schedule. With an original contract cost of P952.6 million, the project's contract duration has been revised from 840 to 920 calendar days, with the revised completion date set May 5, 2007.

Fernan Gianan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Banahaw reforestation planned

LUCENA CITY—As part of continuing efforts to rehabilitate the mystical Mount Banahaw, Quezon Rep. Proceso Alcala filed House Bill No. 5120 that seeks a massive reforestation program in the mountain. Alcala said the reforestation program will include the planting of endemic fruit-bearing trees in the municipalities of Dolores, Candelaria, Sariaya and Tiaong, all at the foot of the Mt. Banahaw-San Cristobal. The reforestation program at the other side of the mountain facing Lucban town is being initiated by Quezon Rep. Rafael Nantes.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Sanchez's men pass lie test

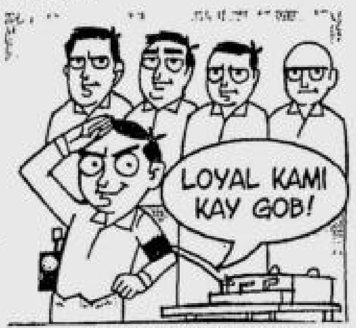

LOYAL KAMI KAY GOB!

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Eight close-in security staffer and two drivers of Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez had passed the polygraph test that the police administered on them, police said. Supt. Ligaya Cabal, regional chief of the Crime Laboratory of the Calabarzon police, said the test on Sanchez's aides, including eight active police officers, revealed that "no deception is indicative of the test results on the (subjects)." Senior Supt. Ricardo Padilla, head of the special police team investigating the failed assassination on Sanchez, had earlier said that the test was meant to clear the aides of any complicity in the case.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

165th vigilante death

CEBU CITY—A tomb-maker was the 165th victim in vigilante-style killings in Cebu City. Benjamin Raganas, 42, was busy making a tombstone when one of two men in a motorcycle shot him about 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday outside Carreta Public Cemetery along General Maxilom Avenue. Jojo Castro, the victim's cousin, said the assailant disembarked from the motorcycle and shot Raganas. When the victim slumped to the ground, the gunman fired several shots to finish him off.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Brutal killing

BACOLOD CITY—The case of a 6-year-old boy who was found dead with a decapitated sexual organ and whose ears were cut with a sharp object in Barangay Tabun-ak, Toboso, Negros Occidental continues to puzzle the town's police. The body of Jessie Tabotabo, who was reported missing on June 12, was found the following day floating in a river in Sitio Curba Hagnaya of Barangay Tabun-ak, the police reported. Toboso police investigator SPO3 Oscar Sisican on Saturday said police also found cuts in the boy's brow.

Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Misuari release urged

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) has urged anew the government to release its leader Nur Misuari from detention. The MNLF leadership aired the appeal during the two-day MNLF leadership and peace consultation held at Matutum Hotel and Restaurant here. More than a hundred MNLF officials and followers showed up during the consultation. Murzhi Ibrahim, MNLF secretary general, said the government must release Misuari before the scheduled GRP-MNLF-OIC tripartite meeting in July in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Rapist draws death as penalty nears end

BACOLOD CITY—A REGIONAL trial court judge here meted out the death penalty to a 28-year-old man for the rape and killing of a 17-year-old high school honor student despite the impending abolition of the capital punishment.

Judge Anastacio Rufon, of the Bacolod RTC, found Guillermo Manayon Rama Jr. guilty of the special complex crime of rape with homicide and sentenced him to death.

The court said the capital punishment could still be imposed on Rama because the death penalty had not been abolished.

The Senate and the House of Representatives last week approved a bicameral report abolishing the death penalty. President Macapagal-Arroyo said she would sign it into law prior to her visit to the Vatican.

With the vote, Congress has repealed Republic Act No. 7659 or the Death Penalty Law, which was re-imposed in 1993, and Republic Act No. 8177, which designates death by lethal injection for those convicted of heinous crimes.

Court records showed that Rama was accused of sexually assaulting the victim on Oct. 23, 2000 at a sugarcane field in Barangay Cabug in this city. The victim was then strangled to death and thrown into a canal.

The victim was an honor senior student at the Sum-ag National High School Cabug extension.

She represented her school in the Boys and Girls Week sponsored by the Rotary Club of Bacolod and was named queen during a Filipino Week celebration in her school.

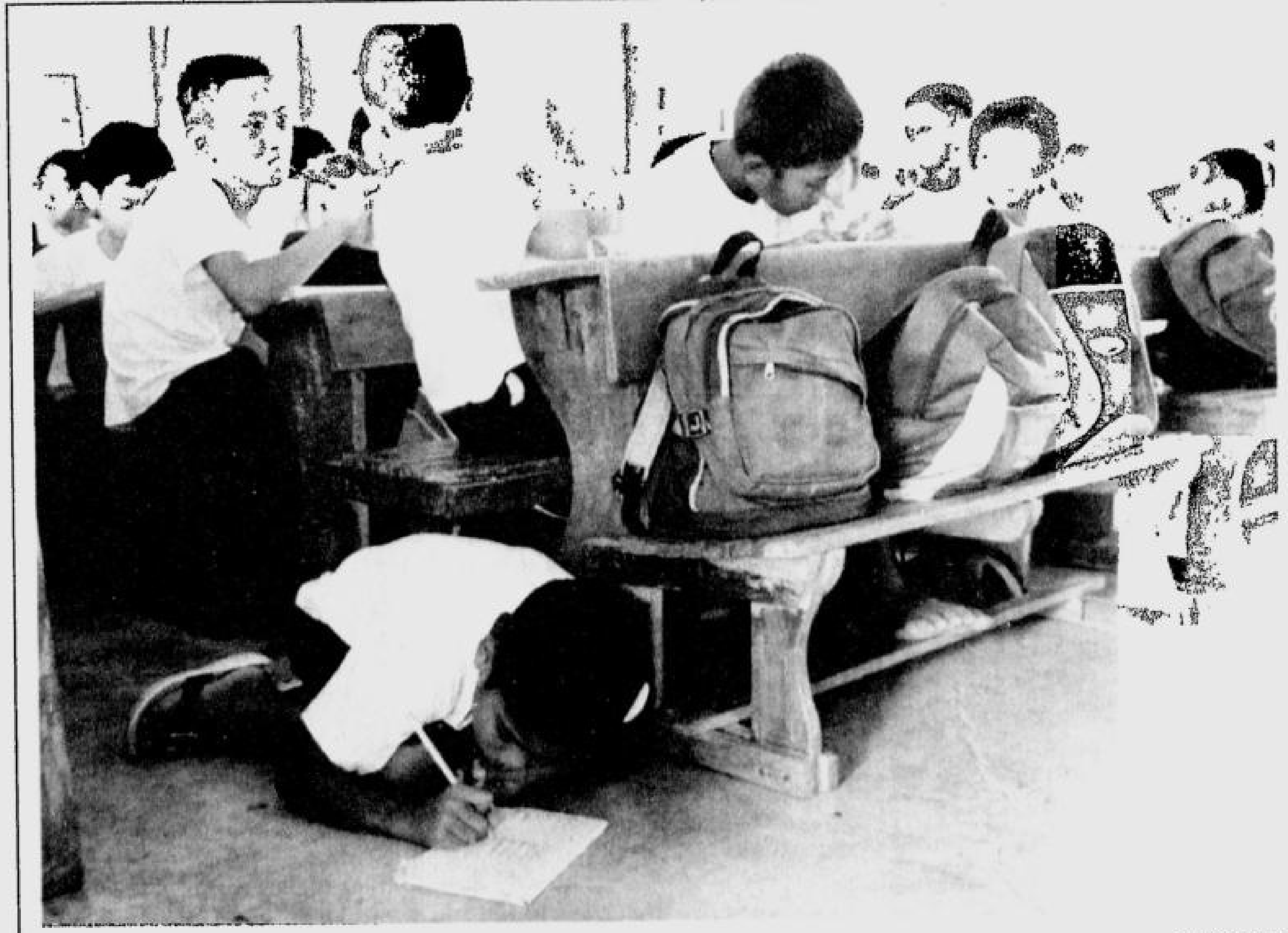
During the trial, Juan Rubico had testified that he was the legal counsel who advised Rama to plead guilty because the accused admitted to him that he committed the crime.

He told the court that he explained to Rama the consequences of his admission but the accused said his conscience was bothering him.

Presented in court was an affidavit of the convict wherein he admitted that he brought the girl to the sugarcane field and hit her until she was unconscious.

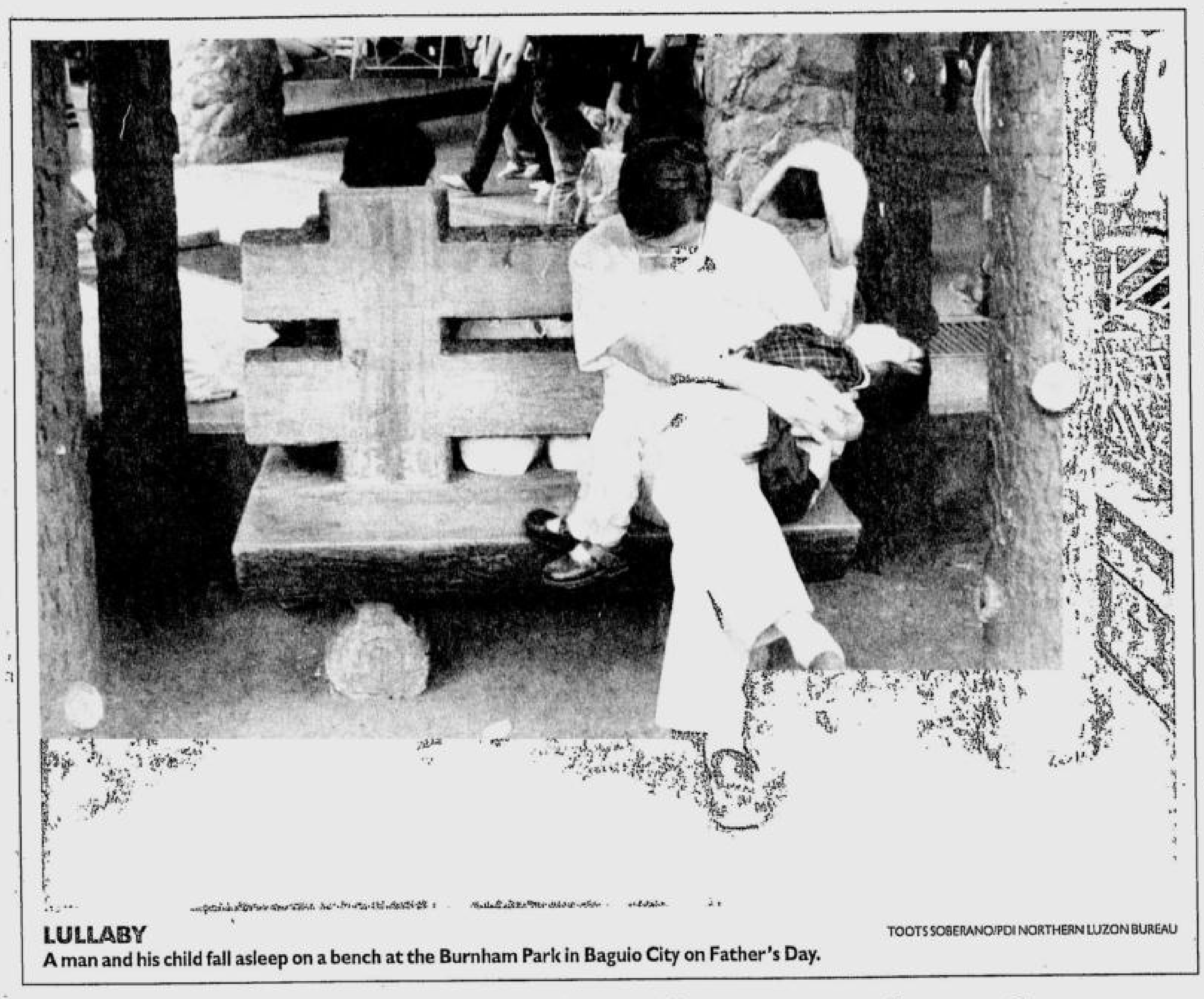
In the affidavit, Rama merely touched her private parts before he strangled her to death and threw her body into a canal.

He then went to a river, took a bath, rinsed himself at a water pump and attended a seminar at the Cabug First Baptist Church.



EDWIN BACASMAS

FLOOR CHORE
Efren Doroteo, a Dumagat tribe member, learns to write his name on the floor due to lack of seats in the mountain of Sta. Inez, Sampaloc, Quezon province.



LULLABY
A man and his child fall asleep on a bench at the Burnham Park in Baguio City on Father's Day.
TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Benguet execs want to study contract on load limit on NLEx

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Provincial officials want to see a copy of the contract between the government and Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) before they decide to act on a request of vegetable truckers for load limit exemption along the North Luzon Expressway (NLEx).

Members of the Benguet Truckers and Traders Association (BTTA) complained to the provincial board recently about huge losses they incurred from the reduction of highland vegetables delivered to Metro Manila and southern provinces caused by NLEx's load limit on cargo weight.

They wanted MNTC officials to consider their plight by increasing the allowable load or exempting them from the requirement.

But a Department of Public Works and Highways official in the Cordillera doused the truckers' request, saying the load limit is provided for by law and that only Congress, not MNTC, could make the changes.

"The DPWH weight standard is the same standard used at the NLEx," said William Balajo, chief of the DPWH Cordillera construction division.

Balajo was referring to cargo limits being implemented by the DPWH for all kinds of vehicles passing through the newly rehabilitated Halsema Highway, an 84-km all-weather road that starts from this capital town to Barangay Abatan in Buguias town.

MNTC imposes a maximum load limit of 13.5 metric tons per axle on NLEx. A six-wheel truck has two axles, while a 10-wheel truck has three.

MNTC prevents overloaded trucks from using the NLEx and violators are slapped a fee equivalent to 25 percent of the motor vehicle user's charge paid by truck owners to the Land Transportation Office.

Augusta Balanoy, BTTA liaison officer, told the provincial board that the load limits had exacted a heavy toll on the volume and income of vegetable deliveries to Manila.

She said that based on the BTTA records, the association's six- and 10-wheel trucks failed to deliver from January to November last year 366.79 million kilograms of vegetables to Metro Manila worth P4.3 billion due to the load limit. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Firms warned of new highway robbery tactic

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—Police on Monday advised owners of export companies and cargo forwarding firms to conduct thorough background checks on their drivers as highway robbery syndicates appeared to be increasingly using them in rackets in Central Luzon.

Saturday's hijacking in which Taiwanese businessman Chow Fang Keun lost P1 million worth of export goods showed indications of that modus operandi, according to Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, Central Luzon police director.

Citing the accounts of two helpers rescued by policemen in Arayat town in Pampanga on Sunday, investigators said this was how the driver, identified as Julius Sanchez, pulled off the heist:

On the way to Manila from the Subic Bay Freeport in Zambales, Sanchez parked the truck along the San Simon, Pampanga stretch of the North Luzon Expressway. He then instructed one of the helpers to disembark and check the lights.

Two men on board a van appeared and ordered Sanchez to drive. Before that, they tied and blindfolded the two helpers on the front seats. The two could not pinpoint the location of the warehouse where the goods were unloaded.

The helpers and the now empty truck were abandoned in Barangay San Juan Bano in Arayat.

"We see connivance here," Rafanan said. Sanchez was said to have fled with the suspects, investigators said.

While it was standard procedure to require job applicants to submit clearances from the barangay, police or the National Bureau of Investigation, companies could obtain background information from the neighborhood or police records, Rafanan said.

Companies could also tap the police to conduct background checks on prospective employees, he said.

Saturday's heist was the second biggest highway robbery case so far. In February, thieves stole Nestlé products worth P1 million before leaving four workers in Barangay Tabuan, also in Arayat.

Police had so far recorded six highway robbery cases from January to June 15.

In the nine incidents in 2005, companies lost at least P6 million worth of goods. Most of the robberies were staged in Tarlac.

Highway robberies are also frequent in the southern part of Luzon, prompting police in the area to set up checkpoints.

But the checkpoints have reportedly become centers of extortion for policemen and law enforcers. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Unpaid bills reaching ₱5.9M cut electricity in offices in Quirino

DIFFUN, QUIRINO—OFFICES OF the provincial government in Cabarroguis town have been without electricity since June 13 after the local electric cooperative cut off power supply due to more than P5.9 million in unpaid bills.

Nelson Macato, general manager of the Quirino Electric Cooperative Inc. (Quirelco), said the board ordered the disconnection due to the alleged refusal of provincial officials to settle unpaid bills that the province had accumulated in the past two years.

"We have repeatedly sent notices to them, asking for payment since January, but to no avail. The cooperative had to do this because we also needed the money to pay the [National Power Corp.]," Macato said.

Provincial officials said the power disconnection had disrupted the transactions of offices at the provincial capitol.

"Documents could not be processed because computers could not be used. Employees were upset because it was either too hot or dark inside their offices," an official said.

Others simply opted to stop working, he added.

Power was also cut off at the provincial government-owned Quirino Polytechnic College.

But Quirelco officials said the Quirino Provincial Hospital in Barangay San Marcos in Cabarroguis town and other medical facilities under the provincial government have been spared.

In a phone interview on Sunday, Gov. Pedro Bacani, who is in Russia for an official trip, said he would settle the problem when he returns to the country this week.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Vice Gov. Dakila Carlo Cua, the acting governor, for comment. He did not take calls on his mobile phone or reply to text messages on Sunday.

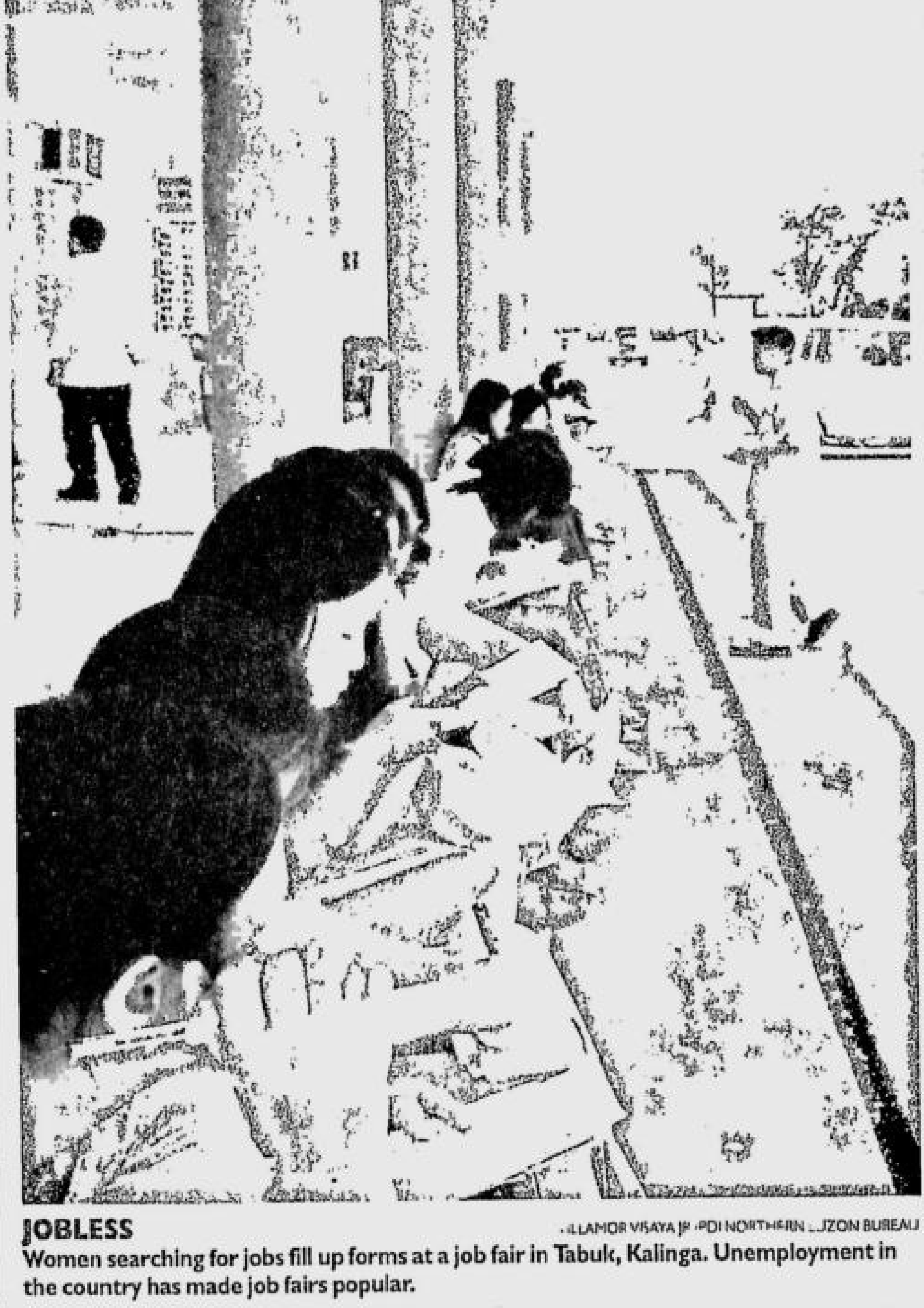
Macato said the Quirelco board members declined to heed a resolution from the provincial board requesting that the power supply be immediately restored at the capitol.

"It was only a request, with no mention of payment, so [the board] took no action. The directors wanted a promise [of payment]," he said.

Macato said local officials have insisted that the provincial government's obligation would be offset by the unpaid real property tax that the province would collect from the power cooperative. *Melvin Gascon and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

MAGBAYAD NA KAYO!

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ



JOBLESS
Women searching for jobs fill up forms at a job fair in Tabuk, Kalinga. Unemployment in the country has made job fairs popular.
VILLAMOR VISAYA JR./PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Ex-sugar mill workers learn small trading

DUMALAG, CAPIZ—FORMER SUGAR MILL workers in this town who were displaced when this town's major sugar central shut down almost six years ago would finally be given training for alternative livelihood.

When the sugar mill closed down in 2000, more than 300 workers instantly lost their jobs. Of these, 210 came from the town of Dumalag where the Asturias Sugar Central, later renamed Monomer Sugar Central, was located.

Today, the displaced sugar mill workers from Dumalag could become productive again, this time no longer as workers but as entrepreneurs, using the skills and knowledge they would acquire from training and livelihood assistance projects initiated by the Technical Education Skills Development Authority (Tesda), the office of Rep. Fredenil Castro of the second district of Capiz and the Dumalag Vocational and Technical School (DVTS).

The training began this month at the DVTS in Dumalag town. The training includes courses in broiler production, hog raising, hot kitchen cooking, and automotive mechanic and driving.

Tesda public information officer Julie Baraquia said that, of the displaced sugar mill workers from this town, 112 workers and their families benefited from the joint project.

Castro initiated the project to help the displaced workers, with Tesda providing the funding. DVTS, headed by Dr. Zenaida Fajardo, provided the training staff and venue.

Baraquia said the sugar central in Barangay Santo Niño of this town started in 1967 as Asturias Sugar Central. It was established by the late Thomas Ford Sr.

A new owner took over in 1990 and renamed the sugar mill Monomer Sugar Central. In 2000, however, the mill finally shut down due to financial losses, leaving behind 320 displaced workers, some of whom came from other parts of Capiz and the province of Iloilo. *Felipe V. Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Ibaloi folk in Benguet pool resources to determine real Baguio size

BAGUIO CITY—IBALOI ELDERS of vegetable-producing towns in Benguet have decided to work together to obtain the definitive measurement of Baguio, which was carved out of old Ibaloi towns by the American colonial government in 1909, a National Commission on Indigenous Peoples official said.

Leilene Carantes-Gallardo, NCIP Cordillera director, said Ibalois have started conducting researches to validate the actual size of Baguio so they can settle disputed political territories and overlapping property holdings that prevent NCIP from releasing ancestral land titles.

Many of the Ibaloi communities are also entitled to Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADTs), which cover both farmlands and forest lands serving the tribes, unlike Certificates of Ancestral Land Titles (CALTs) that cover only homesteads.

Baguio's Barangay Happy Hallow near the forested reservation of Camp John Hay, where descendants of some of the city's old Ibaloi and Kankaney settlers reside, has been identified by Malacañang as a potential CADT beneficiary.

Larger boundary

Gallardo said the Ibaloi initiative might help prove that the city boundary was far larger than what the 1909 Baguio charter originally intended.

"What [the Ibalois] need to determine [is] where exactly is the ancestral domain of Baguio... We all know historically that Baguio had been carved out of two adjacent towns," she told a press briefing here.

"However, for purposes of titling the domains of La Trinidad town [which serves as the country's trading post for salad vegetables], Tuba town and Itogon town [where some of the country's oldest mines began], the Ibaloi elders agreed to follow the 49 sq km [size prescribed by the old charter]," she added.

The city government bases most of its urban development plans on 1925 survey documents that describe the city size to be 57 sq km.

Gallardo, however, said a final political boundary that will finally mark out the territories of Baguio and its Benguet neighbors would not automatically alter the size of an ancestral domain application because domains are measured according to territorial boundaries described historically and anthropologically by the tribe's oral records. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

EZ2 26 25

SUERTRES 8 5 8

(All in exact order)

FOUR DIGIT 9 9 0 4

MEGALOTTO 6/45 13 16 31 35 42 45

₱25,560,630.00

RP roads unsafe for kids, study shows

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE COUNTRY'S STREETS ARE NO PLACE FOR kids.

A new study conducted by Safe Kids Philippines involving around 3,000 children who had suffered injuries showed that 56 percent of them were hurt in road accidents, primarily involving bicycles, motorcycles and tricycles.

Road accidents were also the second leading cause of death among children at 5.85 per 100,000, according to the 2003 Philippine National Injury Survey the results of which were revealed by the Department of Health yesterday.

"We cannot allow this to happen to the future leaders of our country," said Health Secretary Francisco Duque III during rites marking 2nd National Safe Kids Week this week.

"We must protect them not only against deadly diseases but also from injuries caused by accidents," Duque said.

In the study by Safe Kids Philippines, a nongovernment organization, 98.5 percent of the respondents were pedestrians aged six years and older. Sixty-eight percent were male.

"It's really time for us to pay attention to how our children walk in the streets," said Dr. Rafael Consunji, Safe Kids president.

The findings appeared to coincide with another set of findings released by Consunji that showed that some 96,000 Filipinos were either killed or injured in the streets every year. Of the number, around 35,000 were pedestrians.

He noted that local streets were often rendered impassable by too many road works, the lack of pedestrian lanes, sidewalks given to garbage and vendors, and even dogs allowed to roam freely in front of their masters' houses.

The 3,000 cases in the Safe Kids study were patients rushed to hospital emergency rooms in Pasay, Parañaque and Olongapo cities, according to Consunji.

Consunji said 72 percent of the injuries reported in emergency rooms were "unintentional" and were caused by three factors—road accidents, falls and lacerations.

"Most of the injuries happen to low-income families or those who benefit less in terms of access to hospital care and quality health services," said Dr. Jean Marc Olive, representative of the World Health Organization in the Philippines.

"Injuries like those caused by road and traffic deaths can be prevented or controlled," Olive said.

Consunji said it was not enough that the streets and sidewalks were cleared.

"Equally important are the strict enforcement of road safety rules and the education of the public, particularly the children," he said.

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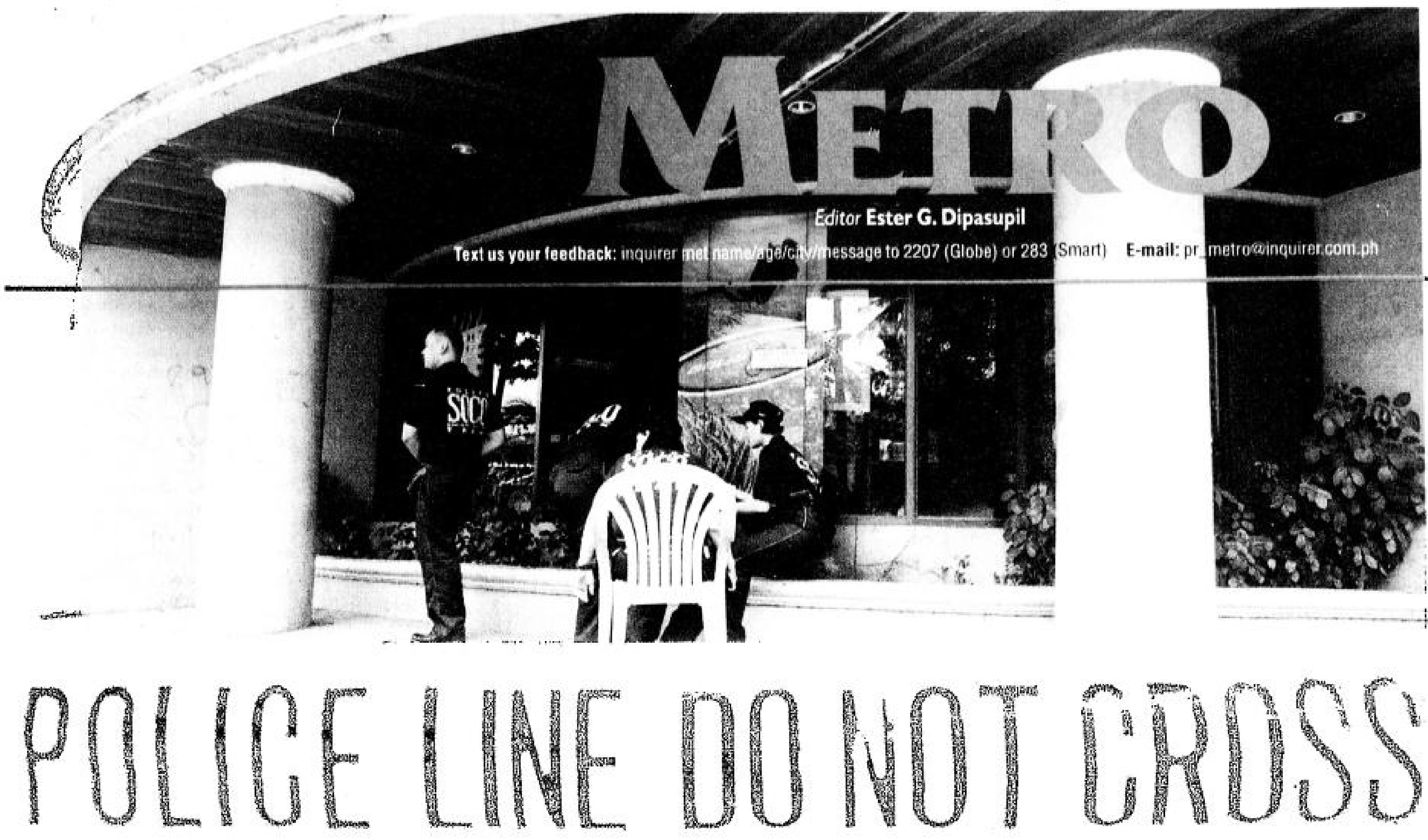

MAKATI policemen examine the site of the latest bombing incident in the metropolis.

RYAN LIM

WHAT'S INSIDE

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- NBI agents seize fake slimming pills in Quezon City /A18
- UN study says Manila Bay worth P8 billion /A18

Another blast rocks Makati

Grudge eyed as motive by cops; 4th Metro explosion in 1 month

By Tarra V. Quismundo

RESIDENTS OF BARANGAY SAN Antonio, Makati City were just rousing themselves from sleep when they heard a loud bang coming from the corner of St. Paul and Mayapis Streets at around 6:15 a.m. yesterday.

Witnesses saw two men on board a red motorcycle leaving the area in a hurry, a few seconds before an explosion occurred in front of the three-story Aquaventure House.

The building serves as the office of Aquaventure Philippines, a diving equipment shop and training center.

Block away

The building is just a block away from Mayor Jejomar Binay's house on Caong Street.

The explosion was caused by an MK2 fragmentation grenade, according to Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia, Southern Police District director.

No one was hurt in the incident and damage to the building was minimal, he added.

"As you can see, it was thrown close to glass panels but it didn't do much damage. It landed on the ground but didn't leave a big crater. This could be just an act of sowing fear and intimidation on the part of the owner's enemy," Garcia said.

Fight

He added, "We are looking at a personal grudge as a motive. When we interviewed the owner, he said he had a fight with a watchman. I cannot say where yet, but the guard is from a place near this area with whom the owner has a long-standing argument. That's the one he is suspected to be responsible for this blast."

The grenade landed on a plant box below the shop's facade made of glass panels. Police are verifying the identity of the owner of the motorcycle based on the license plate given by witnesses.

Motorcyle owner

"Things will be clearer when we trace the owner of the motorcycle. That's the key in this case," Garcia said.

The blast occurred more than 24 hours after an unidentified person threw a hard object at the shop, leaving a hole in one of the glass panels. The incident happened at 3:38 a.m. Sunday, said Jose Sola, the building watchman.

Hours after yesterday's explosion, one of the employees received a call from a man who said, "*May granada dyan sa loob. Lahat kayo sasabog.* (There is a grenade inside. All of you will be hurt in the explosion.)"

The bomb threat was reported at around 11 a.m. just as media persons were interviewing police officials at the site.

Building cleared

Authorities promptly ordered everyone to clear out as the Makati Special Weapons and Tactics team inspected the building. They found nothing, however.

Based on the count of the Philippine National Police, the blast was the fourth to hit Metro Manila this month and the second in Makati, occurring 13 days after a pillbox was hurled in front of the Yuchengco-owned Great Pacific Life (Grepalife) building on Gil Puyat Avenue.

Other sites

Blasts also hit a police satellite bus in Philcoa, Quezon City on June 11 and a SWAT van inside Camp Bagong Diwa on June 13.

The group "Taong Bayan at Kawal" had claimed responsibility for the first three explosions.

Fire hits telecoms cell site in Caloocan

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A FIRE HIT THE CELL SITE OF A telecommunications company in Caloocan City on Sunday night, destroying millions of pesos worth of equipment.

Based on the report filed by Chief Insp. Jose Valencia, head of the city's investigation unit, the fire broke out at around 6 p.m. at the Smart cell site in Sikatuna Extension, Urduja Village, Barangay 172.

Valencia said three base transceiver stations worth P3 million and another piece of equipment worth P1 million were destroyed in the hourlong blaze which was finally put out at 7 p.m.

"They (Smart employees) claimed that it was due to a power interruption but arson investigators from the Bureau of Fire are still investigating the incident," the police official said in his report.

According to Valencia, an engineer of the company identified as Marvin Javier said that the fire was caused by a power outage.

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Champions Edition!

Roy and Ronald
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No engine shutdown.
No turning off of aircons.
No designated stops.
No tricks.
All real.
Happening on July 7 to 8.

Through the distance and against all odds, brothers Ronald and Roy Aguto of Batanes, are up for another road test.

These brothers have a knack for rough and tough jobs. Ron, who works with the NBI enjoys speed shooting, while Roy is a firefighter who likes to cool down playing golf.

Achieving 43.50 km/liter during the 2003 Manila to Cavite Isuzu Challenge, these siblings are once again set to prove that they are still the best in fuel efficiency.

Will these towering brothers lead the way in this year's Isuzu Challenge?

Powered by:

Now is the best time to solve NPA problem

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's order to the Armed Forces to end the communist insurgency in two years is not doable.

The military wants the insurgency to continue so it can justify its existence and its huge budget.

* * *

It's easy for the government to bring back Jose Ma. Sison, chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), to the Philippines to face murder charges.

The government can seek the help of the United States and other countries that are fighting terrorism.

Since the United States considers the New People's Army (NPA), the CPP's military arm, a terrorist group, then Washington can pressure the government of the Netherlands to send Sison back to the Philippines.

* * *

The United States is doing everything to fight terrorism.

Now is the best time for the government to fight the NPA because it will have the complete support of the United States.

Inversely, it's the worst time for the NPA.

* * *

We have seen how the terrorist Moro band Abu Sayyaf is getting decimated by the day through the help of the United States.

Without US financial (and even military) support, do you think the Abu Sayyaf problem would have been licked?

If the United States gets into the anticommunist insurgency campaign, expect the NPA problem to be solved in no time.

* * *

The military solution is just a small part of the equation in licking the problem.

The big part of the solution is addressing the problem of poverty and injustice committed against the poor by those in power.

So long as many barrio folks don't have jobs, and so long as there are abusive soldiers and policemen and corrupt judges, the ranks of the NPA will continue to swell.

* * *

The decision of the Supreme Court to stop the parceling out of Hacienda Luisita to its farmer-tenants and workers showed that the high court favors the rich over the poor.

The Presidential Agrarian Reform Council had ordered the vast estate owned by the family of former President Aquino parceled out after the Hacienda Luisita management failed to distribute stock certificates to tenant-farmers and workers.

The high court probably doesn't know it, but it's driving thousands of Luisita farmers and workers into the arms of the New People's Army. This is to exclude the hundreds of thousands of barrio folks who sympathize with Luisita farmers and workers.

* * *

The Cojuangcos, who own Luisita, are moving heaven and earth to prevent the parceling out of their hacienda to farmers and workers.

You can't blame them. If they lose Hacienda Luisita they become poor.

They want to retain their wealth at the expense of the poor farmers.

* * *

If you want to read my rebuttal to the person who's behind the poison letters and white paper about me and my brothers Erwin, Raffy and Ben, I invite you to read my column, Target ni Tulfo, in Bandera.

Bandera, a widely circulated tabloid, is a sister publication of the INQUIRER.

I won't dignify that person by writing about him in this column even if his name is not mentioned.

The INQUIRER is much too decent for him.

METROBRIEFS

Boy killed in Navotas

A 9-YEAR-OLD BOY was killed while a woman was wounded by policemen who were conducting an anti-illegal gambling operation at the Navotas Fish Port Complex on Sunday afternoon. Daniel Baruc, a Grade III pupil, was hit in the forehead by a stray bullet when Insp. Regalada Ascano, a member of the Maritime Police Station assigned at the fish port, fired at a fleeing suspect. Arlene Pelayo, 32, was hit in the chest after a policeman hit a suspect on the head with his gun which accidentally went off. Baruc died at the Tondo Medical Center while undergoing treatment while Pelayo is in critical condition at the same hospital. Ascano and seven other Maritime policemen went to the fishing complex after receiving a tip that some people were involved in illegal gambling operations in the area. Ascano was disarmed following the incident and was placed under the custody of his superior. Charges of frustrated murder are set to be filed against him by Baruc's parents. ***Nancy C. Carvajal***

Slimming pills seized

BE CAREFUL when taking slimming pills. The could be counterfeit. The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday issued this warning following a raid last Thursday in a Quezon City house allegedly owned by Chinese traders. NBI acting director Nestor Mantaring said the raid at 15 Macopa St., Sto. Domingo, Quezon City yielded several boxes of Chinese drugs brought in illegally. These included Ballerina Slim Down in 7 Days Capsule, Ballerina Pearl White Slimming Capsule, Lightsome Capsule for Reducing Weight, Goodliness Fat Reducing Capsule, Reducing Weight Easily Capsule and New Seven Days Miracle Capsule. Mantaring added that charges for violation of Republic Act 8203 or An Act Prohibiting Counterfeit Drugs would be filed against owners of New Greston International Corp., Albert Chua Tan and Paulian Chan Tan. The NBI Special Action Unit (SAU) headed by Assistant Regional Director Vicente De Guzman III conducted surveillance operations after receiving information regarding the sale of counterfeit drugs in the area. Upon verification, the Bureau of Food and Drugs said the suspects' company did not have any license to operate as a drug distributor or manufacturer. ***Margaux C. Ortiz***

UN study says Manila Bay worth P8 billion

By Blanche S. Rivera

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, MANILA BAY IS worth much more than its famous sunset.

Manila Bay, with its mudflats, mangroves, coral reefs and thriving ecosystem, has an annual economic value of P8 billion, according to a study carried out by the United Nations Development Program last year.

"This amount represents a partial assessment of the total economic value of Manila Bay. The actual total economic value is, to all accounts, larger," the UNDP Regional Programme on Building Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (Pemsea) said its May 2006 policy brief released last week.

Pemsea's Maricor Baustista, a member of the group that conducted the economic study, said they did not include the economic value of the bay as a recreational area, a habitat of migratory birds and juvenile fish and as a source of shoreline protection, among others.

"The P8 billion is the lowest valuation (of Manila Bay). We were not able to survey the corals, the mangroves in areas where there is the New People's Army. The (determination of) other values would need different methods that would take more time and resources," she added.

Around 30 percent of the county's population reside in the bay's watershed which covers nine provinces across three regions, contributing up to 52.5 percent of the country's gross domestic product, the Pemsea said.

This represents the total contributions of Regions 3, 4 and Metro Manila which form part of the Manila Bay watershed. The contribution took into account the services, industry, agriculture and forestry sectors' factor in the GDP.

"We don't look at the bay as a water area but as a whole watershed," Bautista said.

MANILA BAY: Not just valuable for its sunsets.

PDI PHOTO

The Manila Bay has a coastline measuring 190 sq km. and a watershed area of 17,000 sq km.

Aquaculture and mariculture account for 59 percent of the bay's economic value, tourism, 23 percent; ports and harbors, 10 percent and offshore fisheries, 8 percent.

The bad news is that the ecosystem of the bay is also being damaged at an alarming rate, resulting in socio-economic losses estimated at an average of P4 billion yearly or half the bay's economic value.

Fishermen are losing P1.92 billion in income due to red tide, accounting for the biggest chunk of the P4-billion damage to the bay, the study showed.

Export losses from shrimps, meanwhile, accounted for P1.6 billion while the mortality cost of water pollution, or the lost income due to premature death caused by water-borne diseases, was pegged at around P309.375 million.

The over-extraction of groundwater that causes salt water intrusion and a decline in the value of irrigation water led to P81.61 million in losses.

Losses due to mangrove depletion has been estimated at P18.588 million and the effects of harmful algal blooms at P2.819 million. On the other hand, morbidity due to water pollution or income lost due to diarrhea, hepatitis and poliomyelitis was placed at P15.75 million.

LTFRB computer program to cut red tape

By Daxim L. Lucas

TRANSPORTATION REGULATORS HOPE TO reduce the red tape that operators of public utility vehicles (PUV) routinely encounter when applying for franchises and permits through a newly-inaugurated computerization scheme.

In particular, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) wants to shorten a process that can sometimes take up to two years.

In a statement sent to reporters, LTFRB chairperson Ma. Elena Bautista said the new computer system "aims to give efficient and faster turnaround time for all transactions."

"The aim is to shorten the processing time for transactions which don't require hearings and for those which require hearings," she added.

With the computerization program, a minor transaction between the LTFRB and PUV operators that would take about two- and-a-half months could be resolved in one week, Bautista said.

On the other hand, the more complicated franchise issues that would normally take up to two years to resolve could be processed within a month and a half, she added.

The speedy processing of PUV operators' transactions with the LTFRB was part of the package of concessions government promised to transport groups last month.

The concessions were offered to persuade them to postpone the filing of petitions seeking a fare hike following the series of oil price hikes.

Bautista said the computerization program would be in place in the LTFRB's central office and other Metro Manila branches by mid-October and in regional offices by yearend.

Pasig City to repair 21 government buildings

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE PASIG CITY GOVERNMENT is shelling out about P2 million to repair at least 21 government buildings, most of them schools, in the city.

"We will implement only minor repairs in these 21 buildings. We will just fix a few cracks," Mayor Vicente Eusebio told the INQUIRER.

He said most of the buildings were among those the Department of Public Works and Highways had listed as structures in the metropolis which might pose a danger to the public.

The DPWH Task Force on Building Inspection had reported that at least 15 buildings in the city were in need of urgent evaluation. Twelve of them were elementary school buildings.

EUSEBIO

The report prompted Eusebio to order his engineering department to inspect all government buildings in the city. The department apparently recommended six more buildings for repair work. Two small government buildings are also scheduled for demolition, Eusebio said.

"We will just build new buildings to replace them," the mayor added.

Some of the buildings are directly under the national government, but Eusebio said the city government was willing to shoulder minor expenses.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 929-6626 to 29 • (632) 929-6252
929-6620 • 929-6633 to 35
929-7041 to 43

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Republic of the Philippines
Second Land Administration and Management Project (LAMP 2)

PROVISION OF CADASTRAL SURVEY WORKS IN LEYTE PROVINCE
Project ID No. DENR-R8-I-01-WB-NCB-2006.
Loan Number 7298-PH

1 The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a Loan from World Bank toward the cost of land administration and management project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the contract for Provisions of Cadastral Survey Works in the Municipality of Palompon, Province of Leyte.

2. The Department of Environment and Natural Resource (DENR) - Region VIII, an agency of the Republic of the Philippines, now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for provision of *Cadastral Survey Work in selected barangays in the Municipality of Palompon Leyte Project ID No DENR-R8-I-01-WB-NCB-2006*

Module No	No. of Barangays	Estimated No of Lots	Estimated Area in Hectares	Duration (calendar days)
1	6	730	438	210

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Subject to exceptions stated in this Bidding Documents, only bids from Bidders who pass an eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification. The estimated project cost is ***One Million Pesos (PHP 1,000,000.00)***.

4. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

5 Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from *the Land Administration and Management Project - Provincial Project Implementation Office (LAMP-PPIO)* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below.

6. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Two Thousand Pesos Only (PHP 2,000.00)*** The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative starting ***June 20 - July 25, 2006 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.***

7. The *DENR VIII Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on ***July 7, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.*** at the *DENR LAMP PPIO Conference Room, OSS Bldg., Candahug, Palo, Leyte.*

8. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before ***July 26, 2006; 2:00 p.m. Late Bids shall not be accepted***

9. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of *Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank Draft, Irrevocable Letter of Credit* in an amount equivalent of Ten Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00) or a Bank Guarantee in an amount equivalent of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (Php 15,000.00) Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on ***July 26, 2006 at exactly 2:00 p.m. at the LAMP PPIO Conference Room, OSS Bldg., Candahug, Palo, Leyte***

10. Completion of the Works is required by ***March 31, 2007***

11. The *DENR Region VIII BAC* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
LAMP Provincial Project Implementation Office
OSS Bldg., Candahug, Palo, Leyte
Tel/Fax 053-3238842
Visit www.denr-lamp.org

(Sgd.) RAMON S. UNAY
Region 8 - OIC, RTD for Lands
and BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI - June 20 & 25 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE
PROVINCIAL GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE
Provincial Capitol Building, Dipolog City
Tel # (065) 212-3561 Telefax #(065) 212-6492

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Rehabilitation of Mauswagon-Poblacion, Godod Road, Godod, Zamboanga del Norte
(Length = 2.020 kilometers)

The Provincial Government of Zamboanga del Norte through the General Fund of 2005 and Belgian Integrated Agrarian Reform Support Programme (BIARSP) GOB Funds intends to apply the sum *Twelve Million Pesos (Php12,000,000.00)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The Provincial Government of Zamboanga del Norte now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the Rehabilitation of Mauswagon-Poblacion Godod Road, Godod, Zamboanga del Norte under PR#100 (01) 06-5-1222. Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license (at least Medium A) applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contracts with a value of at least 50% of the ABC and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility forms. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act and is restricted unless otherwise stated to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest of outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of R.A. 9184 only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, PGSO, Capitol Building, Dipolog City and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Six Thousand Pesos (Php 6,000.00) only. The bidder shall receive the Bidding Documents personally or his authorized representative on the date specified below.

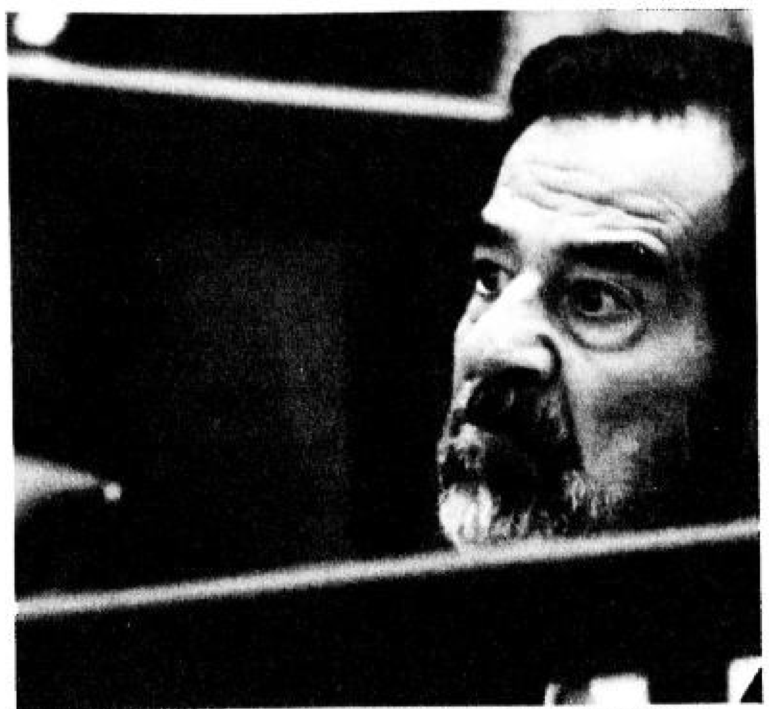
Schedule of Activities	Date	Time
1. Submission of a written letters of Intent together with its Application for Eligibility	June 26, 2006	
2. Submission & Opening of Eligibility Requirements	July 03, 2006	10:00 a.m.
3. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 06, 2006	
4. Pre-Bid Conference	July 11, 2006	10:00 a.m.
5. Opening of Bids	July 25, 2006	10:00 a.m.

All activities shall be held at the Provincial General Services Office, Capitol Bldg., Dipolog City, unless announced otherwise.

The Provincial Government of Zamboanga del Norte reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liabilities to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) EMMANUEL S. LADERA
BAC Chairman
PGSO, Capitol Bldg., Dipolog City 7100
Tel #(065) 212-9093, 212-3501 • Telefax # (065) 212-6492

(PDI-June 13 & 20, 2006



OUSTED Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein listens to the prosecution counsel giving his closing arguments in Baghdad, June 19. AFP

Vatican officials in Beijing for talks on normalizing ties

HONG KONG—VATICAN OFFICIALS HAVE visited Beijing for closed-door talks on normalizing ties despite strains over the installation of two bishops in China without Rome's approval, the church's top clergyman in Hong Kong said on Monday.

"The talks are about ... the whole relationship between the Holy See and Chinese government, about the millions of faithful, Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kiun said.

"It's a big issue and should not be so narrowly connected to the few persecuted priests," Zen told Reuters in an interview.

He would not say if the envoys had already left Beijing, and declined to give details about the talks.

Beijing has had no diplomatic relations with the Vatican since 1951, two years after the Communist Party took power.

It only allows Catholics to worship at state-backed churches that recognize the Pope as a spiritual figurehead but not an effective leader of the Catholic Church.

The Vatican estimates that about 8 million Chinese Catholics worship in "underground churches" not recognized by the government, compared with some 5 million who belong to the state-controlled church.

In 2004, China had 120 bishops, 74 in the state-backed church, according to the Holy Spirit Study Center in Hong Kong, which monitors the Chinese church.

Tension between Beijing and the Vatican flared in May after the state-backed church installed two bishops without papal blessing. Pope Benedict called the installations "a grave violation of religious freedom," and Zen has said the Vatican should break off dialogue with China if there are any more.

Zen told the Paris Catholic daily La Croix last month that the Church was not in a weak negotiating position because China wanted to reestablish diplomatic relations with the Vatican to isolate Taiwan and to strengthen its religious policy at home.

"I hope by now, even the government knows that it was too much," he told Reuters, referring to the unauthorized installations.

Zen said the path to normalization would not be easy, but the biggest obstacle was Beijing's mistrust of the church. *Reuters*

Prosecution to rest case against Saddam

BAGHDAD—THE TRIAL OF SADdam Hussein and seven other defendants on charges of crimes against humanity resumed Monday with the prosecution set to rest its case against the ousted Iraqi leader.

"In today's session, we will listen to the arguments of the prosecution and also hear the lawyers of the victims," chief judge Rauf Abdel Rahman said at the start of the session.

"In the next session (on July 10), we will hear the defense team," he added, warning defendants and their lawyers not to "interrupt the proceedings."

Monday's hearing was attended by all eight defendants, but without some of their attorneys.

Saddam and the seven others are accused of killing 148 Shiite civilians from the town of Dujail north of Baghdad after the then president escaped an assassination attempt there in 1982.

In previous sessions, Abdel Rahman ordered defense witnesses to speed up their testimony, and often pulled up the defense attorneys.

The judge signaled an end to the defense phase on June 13 even though defense lawyers had asked for more time to prepare their case.

"I want to tell the defense attorneys that we are not going to listen to their endless rhetoric," the judge said. "The session is to present their witnesses. They have to choose one of the options—either rhetoric or witnesses."

Abdel Rahman also barred Saddam's half-brother Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, the former head of the secret police, from attending the June 13 hearing after he was removed from the court the previous day.

That hearing saw a repeat appearance by Saddam's other half-brother, Sabawi al-Tikriti, and his former bodyguards who testified for the defense.

The bodyguards testified about the attempt on Saddam's life in Dujail. The murder bid was followed by a wave of arrests, interrogations and ultimately the execution of 148 Shiites from the town.

Gunmen opened fire on the president's convoy from the cover of orchards but Saddam forbade his security team from returning fire for fear of hitting innocent bystanders, the bodyguards said.

"The president said there could be someone innocent in (the orchards) who could be hit by your firing, so stop shooting," one testified.

The hearing also featured a lengthy speech by defendant Taha Yassin Ramadan, a former vice president.

Ramadan said that a key item of evidence against him, a taped conversation in which he is told to destroy the orchards of Dujail, was faked, prompting prosecutors to submit four new documents supporting the charges against him.

Three of the documents were letters linking Ramadan to the confiscation of land in Dujail, while the fourth was an order from Saddam to confiscate land without offering compensation to its owners.

The lawyer for one of the Dujail victims told the trial Monday: "The victims had not done anything against the unity and sovereignty of Iraq and the decision taken by the then court was illegal and violated the law.

"The court passed the death sentence on the victims in just 16 days, which itself shows how artificial the court was. We demand maximum punishment for the defendants." *AFP*

US Episcopal Church elects first woman chief

CHICAGO—THE US EPISCOPAL CHURCH said Sunday it had elected its first woman presiding bishop, a breakthrough after years of resistance in a church already riven by the election of a gay bishop.

Katharine Jefferts Schori, bishop of the Episcopal diocese of Nevada, was elected to serve as the US Anglican church's chief pastor and primate at its general convention in Columbus, Ohio, after five ballots weighed seven candidates for the post.

"I am awed and honored and deeply privileged to be elected," Jefferts Schori said. "May this great and greatly blessed church of ours be the vehicle and leader in building the reign of God in our day."

Current Presiding Bishop and Primate Frank Griswold said in a statement after the vote that "the decision today is the fruit of the witness and ministry of women bishops, priests and deacons in the life of our church."

"Bishop Jefferts Schori is a person gifted in mind, heart and spirit, and I am fully confident that the Church and the Communion will be blessed by her ministry in the years ahead," Griswold said in the statement posted on the church's website.

Schori, 52, has a doctorate in oceanography and has worked with the US National Marine Fisheries Service. She is married to a professor of topology and has one daughter who is an officer in the US Air Force, according to a biography.

Schori's win signals a victory for women in the 2.3 million-member Episcopal Church, the US branch of the Anglican Union. Most of the branches of the Anglican Union around the world have resisted elevating women to bishops. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Iraq dumped millions of barrels of oil

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Iraqi officials say that in a desperate move to dispose of millions of barrels of an oil refinery byproduct called "black oil," the government pumped it into mountain valleys and leaky reservoirs near to the Tigris River and set it on fire. The resulting huge black bogs—in the heartland of Iraq's northern Sunni-led insurgency—are threatening the river and groundwater in the region, which is dotted with villages and crisscrossed by itinerant sheep herders. The region also contains Iraq's great northern refinery complex at Baiji. The suffocating plumes of smoke are carried as far as 40 miles downwind to Tikrit, the provincial capital that formed Saddam Hussein's base of power. An Iraqi environmental engineer who has visited the dumping area described it as a kind of black swampland of oil-saturated terrain and large standing pools of oil stretching across several mountain valleys. The engineer, Ayad Younis, said the clouds of smoke "were so heavy that they obstructed breathing and visibility in the area and represent a serious environmental danger." *NYT*

Pro-whaling nations win first vote

FRIGATE BAY, St. Kitts and Nevis—Pro-whaling nations struck a historic blow against the moratorium on commercial hunting Sunday, winning their first vote in favor of whaling for two decades at global talks here. The Japan-led pro-whaling block was triumphant after forcing a resolution which branded the ban "no longer necessary" through the International Whaling Commission (IWC) annual meeting with a razor-thin one-vote margin. Though the non-binding resolution does not mean the 20-year-old moratorium will be overturned, environmentalists called the vote "tragic" and their worst-ever defeat in the decades-long anti-whaling campaign. "This is the most serious defeat the conservation cause has ever suffered at the IWC," New Zealand's Environment Minister Chris Clark said. The vote represented a major victory for pro-whaling nations led by Japan, who want to turn the IWC away from pure conservation and focus on a return to managing whale stocks for hunting. The moratorium, enforced since 1986, still stands because it needs a 75-percent super-majority to be overturned. *AFP*

E. Timor rebel will only hand arms to Gusmao

LIQUICA, East Timor—A rebel leader in East Timor Monday rebuffed demands for his group to disarm immediately, saying he would only hand over the weapons directly to President Xanana Gusmao. Vincente da Concecao has reportedly alleged that Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri paid his group of retired guerrilla fighters to ensure he was reelected as the Fretilin party leader last month, but broke away from him. Foreign Minister Jose Ramos-Horta travelled to a mountain village outside Liquica, 30 km west of Dili, to ask da Concecao to follow Gusmao's order and hear his account of what happened. Greeted by traditional tribesmen in warrior garb and feather headdresses, Ramos-Horta asked that da Concecao follow the example of Maj. Alfredo Reinado, the leader of 600 rebel soldiers who began giving up arms last Friday. "East Timor doesn't need weapons. We need food, medicines. We don't need weapons," the Nobel Peace Prize winner, who was guarded by Australian peacekeepers during his visit, told the militiamen. *AFP*

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1st place - 2003 Taguig-Batangas (National Championship)
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Driver

No engine shutdown.
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No tricks.
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Happening on July 7 to 8.

DMAX 4x2

Brothers Michael and Patrick have developed a taste for challenges. An Electronic and Communications Engineer, Michael loves long-distance drives, while Patrick, a freelance food stylist, enjoys wind surfing and mountain biking.

Achieving 48.51 km/liter when they drove from Taguig to Batangas in the Isuzu Challenge Finals in 2003, the duo is up for another stimulating ride.

Will these siblings set another record in this year's Isuzu Challenge?

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Japan warns of 'severe action' over Nokor launch

TOKYO—JAPAN WARNED MONday it would join the United States in taking "severe action" if North Korea launched a long-range missile in defiance of growing international appeals.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi issued the fresh warning as a US newspaper report said that Pyongyang was close to going ahead with a new missile test.

North Korea, which declared last year it had nuclear weapons and is boycotting international talks on its atomic program, test-fired a missile over Japan into the Pacific Ocean in 1998 without previous warning.

"I still hope North Korea will not do so. But if they don't listen to us, if they fire a missile, Japan will have to take severe action in discussion with the United States," Koizumi said at a press conference.

He did not specify what the action would be, but said that North Korea had been warned against a launch.

"I think it would be better as prime minister not to say what action to take at this stage," Koizumi said.

"While cooperating with the United States and South Korea, Japan has urged the North in many ways not to launch a missile and to act to prevent a Taepodong or any missile from being fired."

US officials have concluded from satellite images that the communist state had finished fueling a Taepodong-2 missile, suggesting it was set to proceed with a test, the New York Times reported.

KOIZUMI REUTERS

Japanese officials are exchanging information "around the clock" on a possible launch of the Taepodong-2, which has a range of 3,500 to 6,000 kilometers (2,200 to 3,750 miles), said defense chief Fukushiro Nukaga.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe, the government spokesperson, said that the counter-measures could be economic sanctions stopping the flow of Japanese money into the impoverished dictatorship.

"If North Korea test-launches a missile, naturally Japan and the United States will take stern measures," Abe said. "There are no interests North Korea will achieve by launching a missile."

North Korean media on Monday mentioned a missile launch but did not comment on it directly, according to Tokyo-based Radiopress, which monitors media in the communist state.

State radio quoted Russian national radio as saying that the United States was accusing North Korea of preparing a test-launch and "delivering information and speculation which cannot prove to be true," Radiopress said. *AFP*

Global military spending hits $1.12T, says report

STOCKHOLM—US SPENDING IN Iraq and Afghanistan is expected to help push global military expenditure further up in 2006 after hitting $1.12 trillion a year earlier, a research body said.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri) said in its latest yearbook that the United States was behind 48 percent of total world arms spending in 2005 and had accounted for most of the year's 3.5 percent overall gain.

Several states, including Saudi Arabia and Russia, have used a sharp rise in oil prices to boost military spending. The biggest increase worldwide was in the ex-Soviet state of Georgia, which surged by more than 140 percent to $146 million.

"Looking ahead, increasing trends in world military expenditure show little sign of abating in the near future," the Swedish government-funded institute said.

The United States, France and the United Kingdom were all involved in costly overseas operations while China was carrying out a modernization of its People's Liberation Army.

"In these circumstances, there is a strong likelihood that the current upward trend in world military spending will be sustained in 2006," Sipri added.

Britain, France, Japan and China accounted for 4 to 5 percent each of world arms spending, which overall equaled 2.5 percent of world gross domestic product, or $173 per capita.

A process of concentration of spending continued in 2005, it added, as 15 countries with the highest spending accounted for 84 percent of the world total.

The global rise in raw materials' prices helped some countries spend more on weapons, particularly Algeria, Azerbaijan, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

China and India also increased spending, the institute said.

"In absolute terms, their current spending is only a fraction of the USA's. Their increases are largely commensurate with their economic growth," it added. *Reuters*

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Oscar Nuke and Dave Aquino are not your usual partners. When Oscar is done running his auto repair shop, he calls on his brother-in-law Dave, an executive in a large multinational company, for their own kind of joy ride.

They finished 1st in the 2003 Manila to Cavite Isuzu Challenge where they posted a record 38.83 km/liter. And there's no stopping this tandem from pushing the limits of mileage and speed.

WATERLOO REENACTED

Some 900 actors take part June 18 in a remake of the Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon Bonaparte's last stand, fought on June 18, 1875 at Waterloo. AFP

Taliban kill 32 in Afghanistan

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan—Taliban militants killed 32 friends and relatives of an influential lawmaker in southern Afghanistan and 10 others were missing, the member of parliament told AFP on Monday.

MP Dad Mohammad Khan said 27 of the men had been killed in Helmand province when they had gone to the site of an earlier attack in which five others were shot dead.

"Yesterday morning in Taliban attacks, 32 of my relatives and friends were killed," said Khan, the influential former intelligence chief of the province.

"Ten relatives of mine are still missing and five are wounded," he said.

The deputy provincial governor, Mullah Amir Akhund, confirmed the attack and the number of casualties.

One of the five men killed in the earlier ambush was a brother of Khan named Juma Gull, a former governor of Sangin province.

The group had been returning from a visit to Ghorak district in neighboring Kandahar province. "Taliban attacked their vehicle and killed my brother, my son and three other people," Khan said. *AFP*

US illegals blend into workforce

MINNEAPOLIS—IN CONTRAST TO THE typical image of an illegal immigrant—paid in cash, working under the table for small-scale labor contractors on a California farm or a suburban construction site—a majority now work for mainstream companies, not fly-by-night operators, and are hired and paid like any other American worker.

More than half of the estimated 7 million immigrants toiling illegally in the United States get a regular paycheck, experts say. At the end of the year they receive a W-2 form. Come April 15, many file income tax returns using special ID numbers issued by the Internal Revenue Service so foreigners can pay taxes. Some even get a refund check in the mail.

And they are now present in low-skilled jobs across the country. In total, they account for an estimated one in 20 workers in the United States.

Acquiring the necessary documentation to work is a routine transaction these days. In Minneapolis, one only has to wait around for a few minutes in a Kmart parking lot known to immigrants, and a young Guatemalan with a Patron Tequila hat will approach on his bike and quietly offer to help.

The documents themselves cost $110. Within two hours, the Guatemalan is cycling back into the parking lot to make the drop of the ID package. It includes a green card with the customer's photo and somebody's fingerprints, along with a Social Security card, for which the number was plucked out of thin air.

It is remarkably easy for illegal immigrants to get a regular, above-board job.

The law requires employers to make workers fill out I-9 "employment eligibility" forms and provide documents to prove they are legally entitled to work.

But the employers are not expected to distinguish between a fake ID and the real thing. To work, illegal immigrants don't need to come up with masterpieces of ID fraud, only something that looks plausible.

Companies have little to fear. Only 46 people were convicted in 2004 for hiring illegal immigrants; the annual number has been roughly the same for the last decade. *NYT*

SPORTS

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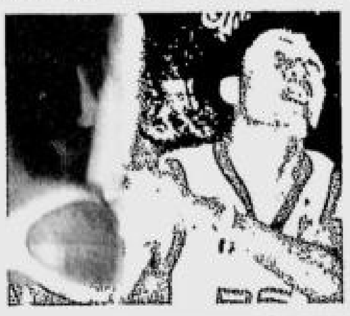


Ogilvy takes cake as 'Lefty' gives it away

MAMARONECK, NEW YORK—Geoff Ogilvy watched the drama unfold on the 18th hole at the US Open while sitting in the scorer's hut, pondering his fate with almost every shot.

The Australian figured he was destined to finish behind Phil Mickelson, who stepped to the 18th tee on Sunday needing only a par 4 to win. Ogilvy could almost envision the huge crowd at Winged Foot cheering in delight for the obvious fan favorite.

This is what Ogilvy remembers thinking would happen:

"He'll hit the green, make par, make New York happy."

This is what did happen:

Mickelson made a double bogey, and Ogilvy became champion of the 106th US Open.

"I think I was the beneficiary of a little bit of charity," he said. "I think I got a bit lucky."

At the end, perhaps. But give Ogilvy credit for getting in position to win it. He chipped in on 17 for par and made a 6-foot putt on 18 for another par. On this day, par for the course was enough to win the tournament.

Ogilvy will soon have his name engraved on a trophy which already has the names of golf greats Bob Jones, Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer. Yet, years from now, when people think about this US Open, it's unlikely they'll talk about Ogilvy's 18-foot chip on 17 or his recovery from a iron shot that rolled back off the green on 18. They'll talk about Mickelson and Colin Montgomerie giving it away with double bogeys on the last hole.

Ogilvy knows this. But that won't lessen the pride in becoming the first Australian to win a major in 11 years, and the first Aussie to win the US Open since David Graham in 1981.

For someone who grew up idolizing Greg Norman, winning the US Open is quite a big deal.

"If it wasn't for Greg, we might not have an appreciation for how big these things really are," the 29-year-old Ogilvy said.

This time, he came up with a once-in-a-lifetime chip on 17, then saw the breaks go his way.

Stuck in the rough on 17, Ogilvy was wondering what to do when his caddie whispered, "Why don't you just chip it in?"

Ogilvy did just that.

And now he's the US Open champion.

The fans who cheered all week for Mickelson probably would have settled for seeing Montgomerie win his first major. But Ogilvy? He had played in only two US Opens, missing the cut in 2003 and tying for 28th last year at Pinehurst. He seemed about as likely to win this tournament as he was to sit down with President Bush at a White House dinner.

Which is what happened recently.

Bush, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Rupert Murdoch and Julie Eisenhower were among those who sat with Ogilvy, a distant relative of Sir Angus Ogilvy, a member of Britain's Royal Family. *AP*

A BIT LUCKY: US Open winner Geoff Ogilvy holds the trophy. AP

'I had it in my grasp and I just let it go'

MAMARONECK, NEW YORK—THROUGHOUT the US Open, Phil Mickelson insisted it wasn't about winning a third straight major title, it was just about winning this one—and that's why losing hurt so much.

"As a kid I dreamt of winning this tournament," he said. "I came out here and worked hard all four days, haven't made a double-bogey all week and then double-bogeyed the last hole.

"Even a bogey would have gotten me into a playoff. I just can't believe I did that."

No one watching could believe it either, including Australian Geoff Ogilvy, who emerged the winner after four brutal days at Winged Foot, with a five-over-par total of 285, one shot in front of Mickelson, Colin Montgomerie and Jim Furyk.

"It hurts, because I had it in my grasp and I just let it go," Mickelson said.

MICKELSON ponders what could have been after missing his chip for bogey on the 18th. AP

Once saddled with the hated best player never to win a major tag, Mickelson finally broke through with a victory in the Masters in 2004.

With triumphs at last year's PGA Championship and the Masters in April, Mickelson at last seemed to have lived up to his promise as a worthy rival to Tiger Woods.

He made numerous trips to Winged Foot prior to the Open, to map out a strategy for attacking the course.

But strategy seemed on the back burner when, having already missed six fairways on the back nine, he took out a driver at 18.

The shot bounced off the hospitality tent, and he decided to try to curve his second shot around a tree in a bid to save par and avoid falling into a possible playoff. His three-iron hit a tree, his third shot was plugged in a bunker, he walked away with a double-bogey and a tie for second place.

"This one is going to take a while to get over," Mickelson said. "This one is pretty disappointing." *AFP*

RP lady pugs nail 2 golds

HANOI—TWO-TIME ASIAN BOXING CHAMPion Mitchel Martinez ruled the lightweight class as the Philippines came away with two gold and one silver medals in the 3rd Vietnam International Boxing Championships recently.

Martinez, a member of the Philippine National Police, scored a RSC-O (referee-stopped contest, outscored) victory over Chinese Taipei's Chien Hsin-Tzu.

Featherweight Annie Albania beat India's R. Devi, 19-12 in a one-sided final.

Alice Kate Aparri fought gallantly but lost to world champion MC Marycom of India, 21-15, in the light-flyweight finals.

With the medal tally, the Filipinas salvaged second place in the 15-nation tournament.

No clear pick as NCAA gets going Saturday

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ONLY THREE MAINSTAYS FROM LAST YEAR'S champion squad will return when the Letran Knights open defense of their NCAA basketball crown against the St. Benilde Blazers this Saturday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Boyet Bautista, Aaron Aban and Dennis Daa now serve as the nucleus of the Knights, who lost to graduation stalwarts John Paul Alcarez, Jonathan Aldave, Mark Andaya, Frederick Rodriguez, Jonathan Pinera and Billy Panabo.

"We will have a new team and the changes may affect our chances of retaining the title, but our will to win is stronger than ever and that's what is important for us," said Letran assistant coach Mel Alas, brother of head coach Louie, during yesterday's NCAA press conference at the ELJ Building in Quezon City.

The rest of the eight-team field will also see action to usher in the 82nd season after the Letran-St. Benilde opener at 2 p.m.

The league has two new coaches—Ariel Vanguardia of JRU and Raymond Valenzuela of SSC.

Vanguardia, a former member of the Talk 'N Text coaching staff, takes over from Cris Calilan.

The Heavy Bombers last won the NCAA crown 34 years ago with a lineup starring the legendary Philip Cezar and Calilan himself. They had only two victories to show in 14 games last season.

GAMES SATURDAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m.—St. Benilde vs Letran
4 p.m.—Mapua vs PCU
6 p.m.—San Sebastian vs Perpetual
8 p.m.—JRU vs San Beda

Raymond Valenzona will take the place of his father, Turo, who has retired.

The Stags will be without prolific scorer Leo Najorda, who is now with the pro league.

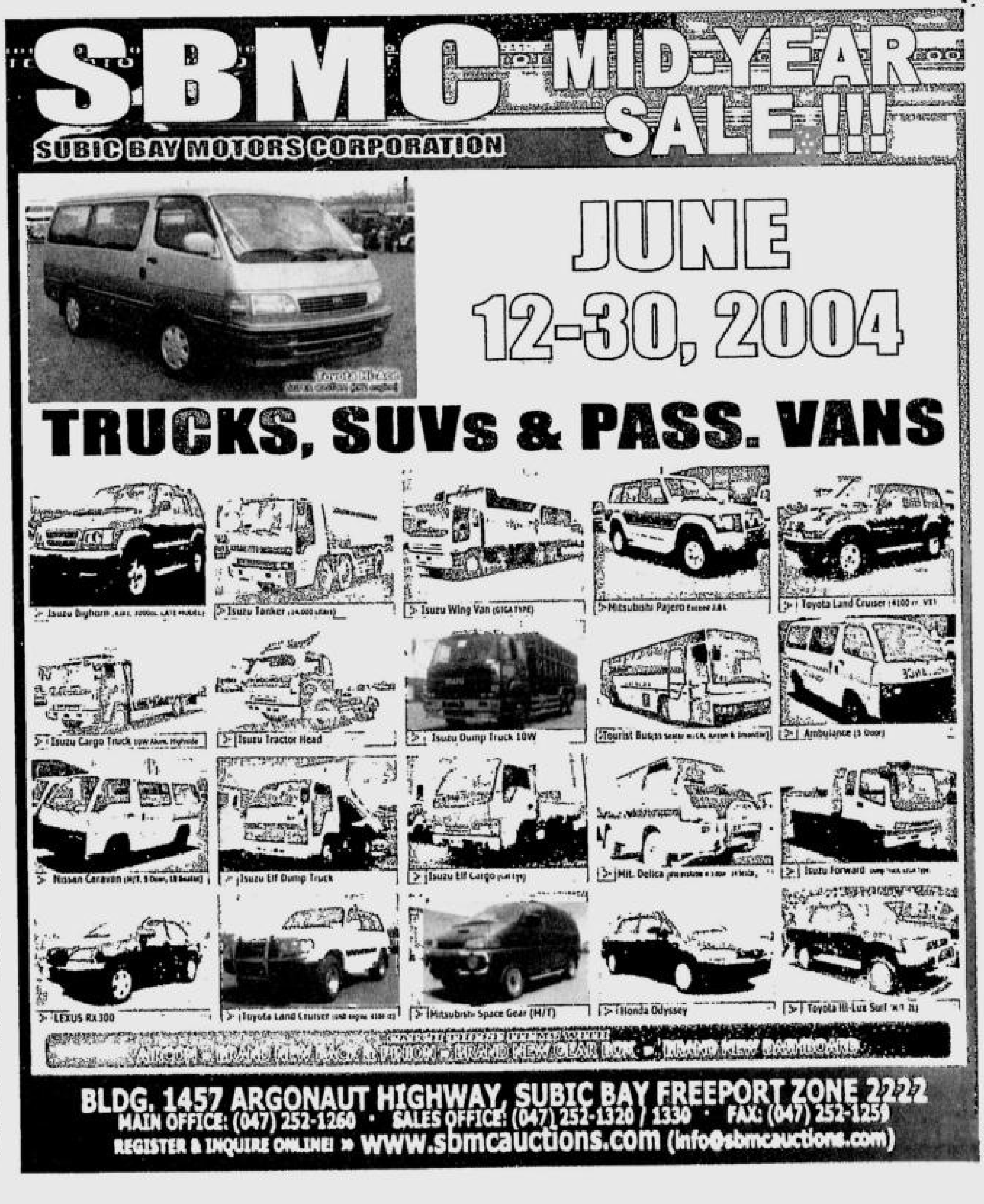
The Blazers will count on Kristian Angelo Aldover, Jingle Devaras and Gerald Christopher Layug in their bid to win the title they last won in 2001 when Sunday Salvacion was still around.

Koy Banal will have his full year mentoring San Beda which is hoping to improve last year's 4-10 record.

University of Perpetual Help System Dalta will rely on a mix of veterans Fritz Bauzon, Vladymir Joe and Josef Racho and fresh talents Jayjay Aransazo and Michael Johnson Kong.

Mapua now pins its hopes on PBL stalwart Joferson Gonzales and last year's rookie of the year Kelvin dela Peña.

The Dolphins ended last year's season with a 10-4 slate behind a lineup led by Gabby Espinas, the league's first Rookie-MVP awardee in 2004. He will still be around as well as Jason Castro, Lisztian Amparado, Beau Belga and Ian Garrido.



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Tugade lording it over for Bulls

STARTING THE GAME OR COMING OFF THE bench makes little difference for Lordy Tugade.

The 28-year-old shooting guard is leading all Red Bull scorers despite coming off the bench of late. He shot more than 20 points a game the past week to power the Bulls past Barangay Ginebra Gin Kings and then to a 1-0 lead over San Miguel in their Gran Matador-PBA Philippine Cup Final Four series.

Tugade, who started in only nine of 22 games, helped the Bulls gain a 3-0 record from June 12-18 to earn Player of the Week honors.

"He's really a big asset to the team because he can create match-up problems," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao of Tugade, who is also the tournament's leading three-point shooter with a 17-of-30 (56.7 percent) clip.

Aside from Tugade's offense, however, there are other sides to the former National U Bulldog's game that are seldom noticed.

"He can also defend, and proof of that is we often use him as a stopper," Guiao added. "He has also learned when to give up the ball."

While helping defend the likes of Mark Macapagal, Allan Salangsang and Sunday Salvacion in their quarterfinal duel with Ginebra, Tugade's shooting touch never wavered.

After scattering 19 points in a 118-97 win last Wednesday, the Alaminos, Pangasinan native came up with a 21-point, eight-rebound and two-assist performance in a 120-98 do-or-die win over the Kings last Friday.

Playing a sixth straight game, the 6-foot-3 gunner again had 21 points in 25 minutes as Red Bull scored an 89-78 win over San Miguel at the start of their series last Sunday. *Musong R. Castillo*

AdU grabs 2nd as SSC falls

STANDINGS	W	L
La Salle	11	1
Adamson	8	4
S. Sebastian	8	5
Lyceum	6	7
FEU	5	8

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Blue Eagle Gym*)
12 noon—Lyceum vs. De La Salle
2 p.m.—Adamson vs. San Sebastian

ADAMSON KEPT ITS TITLE HOPES alive after outlasting Far Eastern even as Lyceum scored a major upset over San Sebastian yesterday in the Shakey's V-League semifinals at the Blue Eagle Gym.

The Lady Falcons endured the jolt of a first-set loss against the gritty Lady Tamaraws before coming back for a 22-25, 25-13, 25-19, 25-20 win to grab second with an 8-4 record behind early finalist La Salle.

Cherry Rose Macatangay unloaded 29 kills to finish with 32 points as Adamson overtook erstwhile second-placer San Sebastian, which bowed to also-ran Lyceum, 6-25, 25-22, 18-25, 25-23, 13-15.

The loss prevented the Lady Stags (8-5) from clinching the second title slot under the five-of-eight incentive, but they'll get a second chance tomorrow against Adamson.

"We will get to know which team deserves to be in the finals," said Adamson coach Dulce Pante.

San Sebastian takes on FEU in its last semifinal assignment, while Adamson battles La Salle and then Lyceum. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

DEBUTANT'S REQUEST

Welcoat wants to keep big men

By Jasmine W. Payo

WELCOAT PAINTS PLANS TO ELEVATE THREE big men from its amateur roster when it debuts in the next Philippine Basketball Association season that starts in October.

Jay-R Reyes, Junjun Cabatu and Samigue Eman make up the team's priority list, according to Welcoat coach Leo Austria.

"We won't have a competitive team if we don't have those three," said Austria. "We want them to be the nucleus of the team."

The three form the imposing frontcourt of Rain or Shine, which finished third in the recent Unity Cup, its farewell tournament in the Philippine Basketball League.

Welcoat, however, will have to go around one technical glitch to fulfill its wish.

After approving the sale of the Shell franchise to Welcoat, the PBA board allowed the new member to elevate three amateur players based on its PBL lineup as of Dec. 31, 2005.

Eman, the 6-foot-10 standout from Mindanao, only suited up for Rain or Shine last March for the Unity Cup, which was eventually won by Harbour Centre.

"His (Eman's) rights have been with [the franchise] before Dec. 31," argued Austria. "It's a technicality we'll be discussing with the PBA. Maybe in a few weeks, we'll know who we can elevate."

Eman led the league in blocks at 2.4 bpg, while the 6-foot-7 Reyes averaged a third-best 1.4 swats. Cabatu, a former La Salle standout, was among Austria's clutch performers.

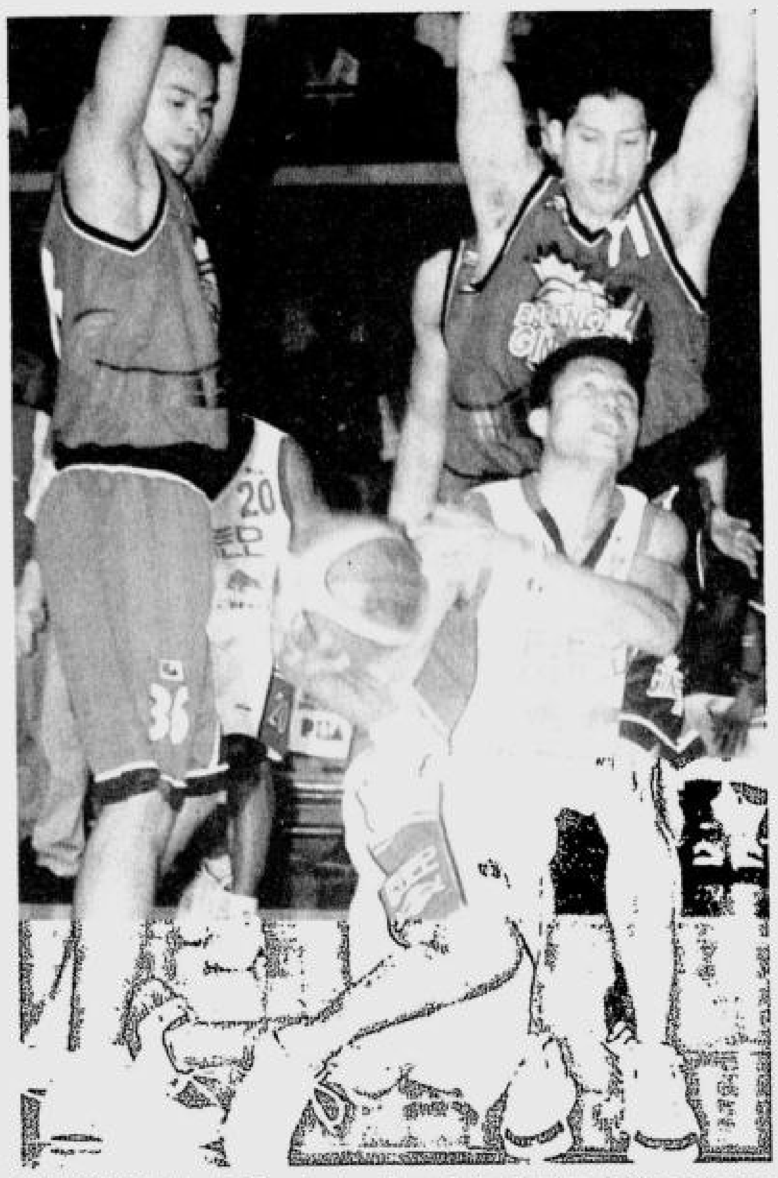
After elevating three players, Welcoat can fill its roster from a dispersal draft to be scheduled by the PBA Commissioner's Office later.

The current nine teams can only "protect" 10 players in their active roster, giving Welcoat a huge pool to choose from.

Welcoat will also have the 10th pick overall in the Rookie Draft this August before picking first in the second round.

"We'll only know the composition of the team after the draft and the tryouts," said Austria. "We're hoping to get a competitive lineup."

Welcoat is moving to the PBA after winning six PBL championships in 12 Finals appearances. The PBL recently paid tribute to the franchise for its outstanding 10-year stint in the league.



WEEK'S BEST: Lordy Tugade slices through the Ginebra defense. ERIK ARAZAS

Pacquiao, Roach due today from Los Angeles

PACQUIAO

BOXING HERO MANNY Pacquiao and trainer Freddie Roach will plane in from Los Angeles this morning and immediately buckle down to work for the final phase of his training for the July 2 clash with Oscar Larios at the Araneta Coliseum.

Pacquiao, who is arriving with members of his management group, is expected to report to the gym in the afternoon to resume his workout and sparring sessions.

In his last training session in Los Angeles, where he sparred 12 rounds, the Filipino ring icon weighed close to the 130-lb regulatory limit and appeared relaxed and in a good mood.

"All we need to do is fine-tune the game plans crafted to counter the perceived strength, talent and skills of Oscar Larios," said Roach, in an interview with the Philboxing.com. recently.

"The format of Manny's training is geared for him to go over 12 rounds with Larios. If we get a knockout before that, that is a blessing we will gladly accept."

"Judging from the relaxed manner he handled everything, including the media interviews, Manny Pacquiao, by all indications, is primed and ready to rumble," said the Los Angeles-based Ed De la Vega, a member of the fighter's entourage.

Pacquiao, according to his business associate Rex "Wakee" Salud, will do his final workout at the Rizal Coliseum, which is deemed a bigger area to hold his training sessions.

Also among those arriving with Pacquiao are his American managers Shelly Finkel, Nick Khan and Keith Davidson, Filipino trainer Buboy Fernandez, and boxers Gerry Peñalosa and Ernel Fontanilla. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

Ozamiz cagers draw first blood in NBC semis

VALENCIA CITY—DEFENDING CHAMPION OZAMIZ Cotta outsteadied Valencia Golden Harvest, 86-83, Sunday night to take a 1-0 lead in their best-of-three semifinal series in the southern division of the 2006 Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball championship at this city's packed gym.

Marlon Basco hit an undergoal stab in the dying seconds to give Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog's cagers the all-important road win.

After the Valencia squad of Mayor Jose Galario Jr. inched ahead, 84-83, Basco eluded his guard to provide the difference in the close contest.

Ozamiz guns for the clincher today when it faces Valencia anew at its home court.

Basco dished out another sparkling all-around performance with 24 points on eight-of-12 shooting, 14 rebounds, five assists, one steal and one block.

Billy Bansil also came up with a double-double finish (21 points and 10 rebounds) to back up Basco in the match sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firefly Lightings, Molten and Prime Channel.

"Marlon (Basco) bailed us out tonight," said Ozamiz head coach Albert Calvo. "But we have to exert more effort to finish the series early."

The scores:

OZAMIZ 86—Basco 24, Bansil 21, Cavan 11, Sampilo 10, Ilanga 9, Liangco 6, Guerrero 3, Lapera 2, Delina 0, Alberto 0, Libatog 0, Cabigkis 0, Caylan 0.

VALENCIA 83—Cabili 18, Cruz 14, Navales 12, Berami 9, Adams 8, Celiz 6, Concha 4, Clavel 4, Nailon 4, Cummings 2, Cesar 2, Braga 0, Dumapig 0, Taligatos 0.

Quarters: 26-24, 52-45, 65-60, 86-83

Xavier routs Merrengues, grabs Adidas Futsal lead

SCORING ALMOST AT WILL AT every opportunity, Xavier Alumni FC whitewashed Los Merrengues, 12-0, over the weekend to wrest the lead in the men's second division A, even as Union Football Club debuted with a 14-3 rout of Marine Officers at the resumption of the 2006 Adidas Futsal Championship at the FMAC Gym at La Salle Green Hills.

Led by Raymond Cordova's six goals, the Xavier booters completely outplayed Los Merrengues for their second victory in as many starts in the three-month long futsal event sponsored by Adidas and held in cooperation with the National Capital Region Football Association.

Gabriel Narciso and John Paul Santos added two goals each, while John Patrick Ong, Aris Cebrero and Emil Balidio chipped in one apiece to complete the rout.

Romario Gaucho, who scored his first goal in the 18th minute, added five more in the match, while Teo Ocampo scored five of his own to help Union FC to its first win in the men's second division (Group B).

Meanwhile, Philippine Air Force downed Pasargad, 8-3, to also climb into the lead in the first division.

Ruben Doctora, Emelio Caligdong and Ian Araneta had two goals each for the Airmen, while Misac Bahadoran also scored two goals as Pasargad took its second defeat.

In other first division matches, the Veterans blanked Superfriends, 4-0, for its first win; Kaya FC drew five goals from Aly Borromeo and one from Jon Chua to turn back Navy, 6-5; and University of Asia and the Pacific, behind Nicholas Reyes and Marc Von Grabowski, whipped the AFP Selection, 10-2.

BAHRAIN CAGE CHAMPS
Bahrain Basketball Association president Sheikh Mohammed (third from left) and his deputy present the trophy to Philippine Ambassador Pablo Maglaya (fourth from left) and Aldrin Morante (left) after national shooting champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla's Spring Cooking Oil cagers bagged the Bahran-RP Goodwill Games crown Friday by routing the Bahrain national squad. Also in picture are delegation head Tito Palma (in red shirt), coach Efren "Yong" Garcia and players Chito Victolero, Nelson Asaytono, Danny Capobres, Long David, Eric Gascon, Gilbert Neo, Mar Reyes and Nani Epondulan.

Intervillage golf today at F. Hills

THE 2006 NOKIA CUP INTERVILLAGE GOLF tournament resumes today with the staging of the Nokia 3 eliminations at Forest Hills in Antipolo featuring nine teams from various golfing villages in the metropolis.

Former champion Greenhills heads the cast in the first round of the 36-hole qualifiers in the third Nokia group. The other teams vying for the top four berths in the grand finals are BF Resort, Merville, Blue Ridge, Cinco Hermano/Monte Vista, New Manila, San Lorenzo, South Bay Garden and Valle Verde 3/5.

Teams with local knowledge of the tough up-and-layout are sure to shine in the tournament sponsored by telecommunications giant Nokia.

Ayala Alabang topped the Nokia 1 eliminations at Riviera, beating BF Homes, Pilar Village and Alabang 400, while Hillsborough showed the way in the Nokia 2 qualifiers as it bested La Vista, Tahanan and Xavierville.

The top four teams in each of the three divisions after the eliminations will advance to the finals of the 12-to-play, 8-to-count tournament.

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SPORTSWATCH

Orcollo tops California pool

THE PHILIPPINES' MONEY-GAME KING DENNIS Orcollo bested countryman Gandy Valle, 11-7, in the finals Sunday to win the 9-ball division of the Hard Times Summer Jamboree billiards in Sacramento, California. The 27-year-old Orcollo won the top purse of $3,500 undefeated. On the way to the championship clash, he beat Don Olson (9-3), David Reljic (9-2), Amar Kang (9-3), Tony Chohan (9-3), Melissa Little (9-2) and Tyler Edey (9-7). Valle settled for the runner-up prize of $2,200. Edey and Macalelon filled up the top four places. Valle, who like Orcollo is sponsored by Perry Mariano, smashed Tony Pak (9-4), pool legend Jose "Amang" Parica (9-5) and Warren Kiamco (9-5) before losing to Edey (9-7) in the winner's bracket in the fourth round. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Mangio-Isip dispute title

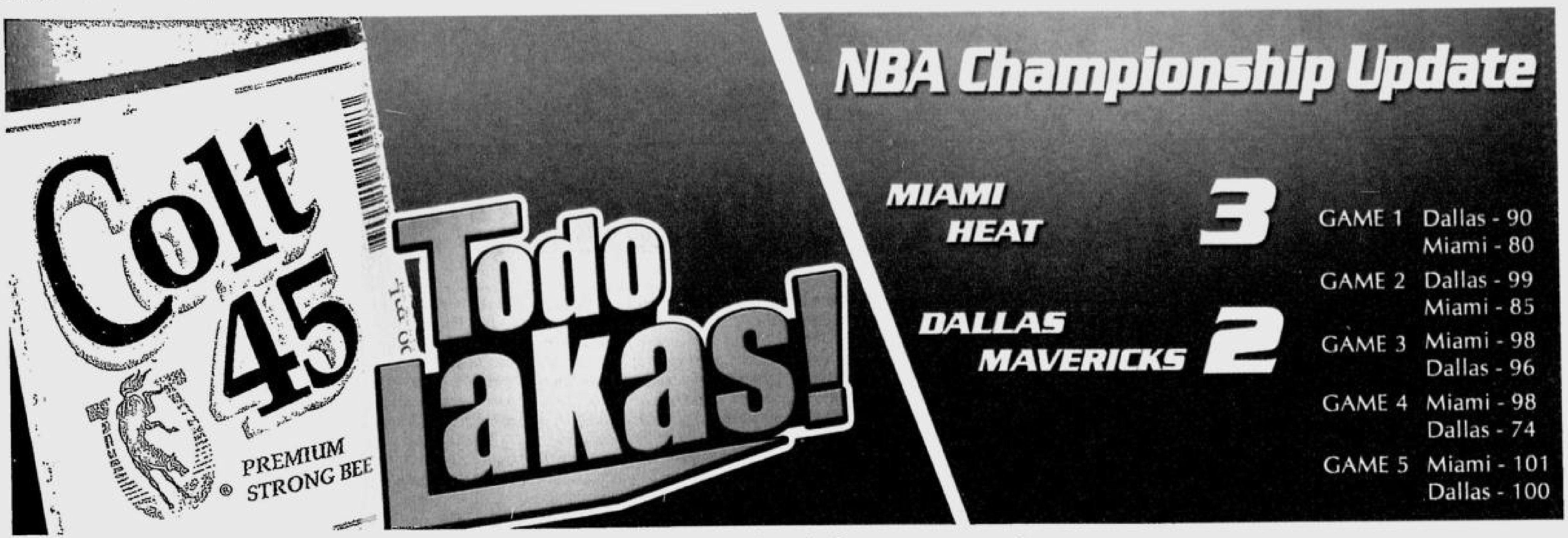
JETSKI RIDERS GEAR UP FOR THE TITLES AT stake in the championship round this Saturday of the 2006 Petron National Jetski Series at the Subic Waterfront Beach. Michael Mangio and Alex Isip are dispute the Novice Rider of the Year plum in the races presented by Petron and sponsored by SBMA, Networx Jetsports, Garry's Grill, Courtyard Inn, Premiere Ready Mix, WOW! Jet Ski-Puerto Galera, Cars and Cycles Autocenter, Ford Global City, Dexterton, Atoy Body Kits, Alex Car Restoration Service, Subic Homes, Petron Lakeshore Toll Service Facility, HSD Iced Products and Hizon Laboratories. Mangio, a 23-year-old executive of the Lakeshore Development Corp., is eyeing a third straight win that will clinch him the Novice 4-Stroke title against Robbie David and Jeremy Chua and the top novice award. Isip, a former motocross rider, is also gunning for the title in the Novice 2-strokes class against Dax Figueroa, Fil-Am Neil Alvarez and JR Pineda. Also favored in the other divisions are BJ Ang in the Expert Runabout 800 Open, former Mutya ng Pilipinas Darlene Carbungco in the Women's Runabout, BJ Ang in the Expert 800 class and Paul del Rosario in the Sport class, the Open Ski and the Expert 125 Unlimited.

Big derbies slated at SJC

A PAIR OF BIG DERBIES BACKED BY SAGUPAAN Complexor 3000 is slated at the San Juan Coliseum. Action starts on Wednesday with the Gentlemen Cockers Asociation of the Philippines (GCAP) Grand Championship 5-cock derby featuring more than 70 fights. Today is the submission of entries from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. For inquiries, call Ronnie at 725-5369, 725-6563 or 0917-8041691. The United Backyard Breeders Association (UBBA) will stage a special 3-cock derby on July 1. More than 50 entries have confirmed for the event which offers a total prize of P200,000, said Ronnie Lacsina of UBBA. Entry fee is P5,500.

Sta. Ana 3-cocker today

IT WILL BE A FOUR-CORNERED FIGHT AMONG derby aces from Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas and Makati in a special 3-cock derby which kicks off at 7 p.m. today at the Sta. Ana Cockpit in Makati City. More than 50 matches are on tap in the event that stakes P150,000 in total cash prizes, said host Cito Manansala. Next Tuesday, June 27, it will be Nelson Pacquiao's turn to host another 3-cock derby at the same venue on AP Reyes Avenue. Meanwhile, pit manager Butchoy Olano has confirmed the participation of more than 150 entries in the much-awaited "Fastest Win-One Cock Ulutan" on July 1. A guaranteed prize of P300,000 is up for grabs for an entry fee of P2,200. For inquiries, call the Sta. Ana Cockpit at 898-3474 or 898-3475.



NBA Championship Update

MIAMI HEAT 3
DALLAS MAVERICKS 2

GAME 1 Dallas - 90
Miami - 80
GAME 2 Dallas - 99
Miami - 85
GAME 3 Miami - 98
Dallas - 96
GAME 4 Miami - 98
Dallas - 74
GAME 5 Miami - 101
Dallas - 100

Miami nears title as Wade hits 21 of 25 free throws

HEAT'S Dwyane Wade soars to shoot under pressure from Mavericks' DeSagana Diop (right) in the second half of Game 5 of their NBA Finals. REUTERS

MIAMI—DWYANE WADE SCORED 43 points, including two free throws with 1.9 seconds left in overtime, to give the Miami Heat a 101-100 victory over the Dallas Mavericks and a 3-2 lead in the NBA Finals.

The series now shifts to Dallas on Tuesday, where Miami can wrap up the first title in its 18-year history by winning either Game Six or, if necessary, Game Seven.

Wade hit only 11 of 28 shots for the game but 21 of 25 free throws, none bigger than the two he nailed in the dying seconds following a foul by Dallas center Dirk Nowitzki.

A three-quarter-court shot by Mavericks guard Devin Harris was way off the mark as the buzzer sounded, setting off an explosive roar from the American Airlines Arena crowd.

A 17-foot fade away shot by Nowitzki in heavy traffic with 9.1 seconds left had given the Mavericks a 100-99 lead but Wade drew the foul by Nowitzki while driving to the basket.

Jason Terry scored 35 points to lead the Mavericks, hitting 13 of 23 shots, including four of nine from beyond the arc.

Dallas entered the game with its confidence shaken after blowing a 13-point lead in the final six minutes of a 98-96 loss in Game Three, and then getting blown out 98-74 in Game Four.

On top of that, key reserve Jerry Stackhouse was suspended for Sunday's game for a flagrant foul committed against Shaquille O'Neal in the third quarter of Game Four.

A jam by center Erick Dampier gave Dallas a 93-91 lead with 10.1 seconds left in regulation. But Wade tied the game with an acrobatic five-foot bank shot with only 2.8 seconds remaining.

Following a time-out, Terry's attempt at a game-winning 17-footer rimmed out, sending the game into the extra session.

O'Neal finished with 18 points and 12 rebounds but the 13-time All-Star was a miserable two for 12 from the free-throw line.

Miami was 32 for 49 from the line, while Dallas was 21 of 25.

Josh Howard added 25 points for the Mavericks but the third-year player missed to key free throws with 54 seconds left in overtime with Dallas holding a 98-97 lead.

Miami's Gary Payton responded with a lay-up high off the glass with 29.8 seconds left to give Miami a 99-98 lead, setting up Nowitzki's potential game-winner with nine seconds left.

The Mavericks easily defeated Miami in the first two games of the series in Dallas, but have lost all three in Miami. *Reuters*

Sports fans have twice the fun

MIAMI, FLORIDA—THIS IS AN EXTRA SPECIAL time of year to be an American sports fan.

With the NBA Finals and the 2006 Fifa World Cup going on at the same time, fans attending the Miami/Dallas series have the best of both worlds.

Before cheering on their beloved basketball heroes at night they can catch the United States playing football during the day.

"I have definitely paid more attention this year than any other year," said Russell Johnson who made the trip to Miami from Vicksburg, Mississippi to catch game five of the NBA Finals. "Soccer is getting more and more popular in the United States thanks to things like Fifa's video games."

Many of the beach-front bars in Miami are hosting special World Cup parties and showing games live on big screen TVs. Waiters are decked out in jerseys of their favorite teams and souvenir shops in areas like 'Little Haiti' and 'Little Cuba' are selling football merchandise.

Popular South Beach bars like the Clevelander are wooing football fans with 'Happy Hour' (half-price drinks) and a breakfast special because many of the game are broadcast live early in the morning in the United States.

Germany's Dirk Nowitzki would like nothing more than to win an NBA title with the Dallas Mavericks and then head to Europe to celebrate a German victory in the World Cup.

"You know, they have a young team, and they have got a new coach that's trying to do some stuff," Nowitzki said of the German team. "I'm just sad that I can't be there to support the team and I can't really watch too much because I'm really focused on the finals."

Miami police officer Barry DeRose boldly predicted the Americans would bounce back from their slow start and win the tournament. *AFP*

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Colt 45
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ASIA BREWERY

Let the buyer beware: Heat are now a white-hot ticket

MIAMI—WHENEVER ERIC WOOLWORTH checks his messages, there's a request waiting. Doesn't matter if it's his home phone, his office, his cell, his e-mail, someone has always made the same inquiry.

"You got any tickets for me?"

Not long ago, the answer usually was, "Yes."

Back then—as recently as the 2003-04 season—the Miami Heat didn't even try to sell out their home building because they knew the supply of seats easily exceeded the demand of fans willing to pay for them. So thick black curtains cordoned off much of the arena's highest level, hiding thousands of empty chairs.

Now, the Heat are the hottest ticket in South Florida, thanks to Shaquille O'Neal, Dwyane Wade and anyone else who played a role in the team reaching the NBA Finals for the first time. And when Woolworth returns those calls these days, his answers aren't received so warmly.

"I still do my best to get back to everybody," said Woolworth, the Heat's president of business operations, "even if it's just to say, 'Sorry.'"

Every regular-season and playoff game this season at AmericanAirlines Arena was a sellout, including Sunday's Game 5 of the NBA Finals between the Heat and the Dallas Mavericks. Over 53 games—41 in the regular-season, 12 in the playoffs—the Heat drew about 1.1 million fans, a team record.

Not only are the seats filled by 20,000-plus every night, they're star-studded now, too.

Enrique Iglesias and Anna Kournikova are regulars. So is Gloria Estefan. Singer Jimmy Buffett is a longtime Heat season-ticket holder. Football Hall of Famer Dan Marino and other past and current Miami Dolphins stars are often in attendance.

Beyonce, Donald Trump, Alex Rodriguez, you name it, if they're a star living in or coming through South Florida, they've probably been to a Heat game this season.

"When you think about who's here to watch us play," point guard Jason Williams said, "it's crazy." *AP*

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Ort/Tri)—Tidal Gaze (5), Super Duper (3), Yapee Yoyoh (6), Runaway Zero-Six (4)
Race 2—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Smiling Jaeda (10), Latin Music (1), Sugar Ray (9), Brittney's Magic (12), Fernan Ikaw Pa Rin (5), Road Runner (2)
Race 3—(Ort/Tri)—Even Now (5), Iron Tower (2), Looney Tune (6), King Isch (3)
Race 4—(Penta/Tri)—Kiwi Rose (1), Jigolo (9), Mika's Pride (8), Genie In Disguise (6), Little Sam (7)
Race 5—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Golden Brook (8), Music Quest (7), Divine Right (1), Yankee Clipper (6), Valentino Girl (1)
Race 6—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Real Tough (10), Kim Possible/Gun Powder (2), Super Dave (9), Gallant Warrior (6), Crafty Treasure (7)
Race 7—(Ort/Tri)—Vinfa's Pride (1), Premiere Event (5), Accomplice (2), Spoiler (3)
Race 8—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Overture (1), Deity (4), Refreshing (2), Virgin Island (14), Dixie Dash (5), Don't David (12)

Hewitt returns to top 10 with Stella Artois win

SINGAPORE—AUSTRALIAN LLEYTON HEWITT vaulted back into the world's top 10 on Monday after triumphing at London's Stella Artois Wimbledon warm-up event.

Sunday's 6-4, 6-4 victory over American James Blake on London's Queen's Club grass courts ended a 17-month title drought for Hewitt—a former world number one—and lifted him from 13th to number nine in the new ATP singles rankings.

Last week's stellar performance led to Hewitt's winning a record-equaling fourth Stella title and leaves him in excellent shape for the Wimbledon grasscourt grand slam, which starts on June 26.

The top of the rankings remained unchanged. Switzerland's Roger Federer—who equaled Bjorn Borg's record of 41 consecutive victories on grass by winning the title in Halle—stays world number one with 7,260 points. Spain's world number two Rafael Nadal has 4,545 with Argentine third-placed David Nalbandian at fourth. American Andy Roddick remained fifth. *Reuters*

SPORTS

Brazil advances; France struggles

BERLIN—BRAZIL OVERCAME A BATTLING AUSTRALIA TO ADvance to the World Cup's last 16 on Sunday but France were left struggling for survival despite ending an eight-year goal drought.

Defending champions Brazil extended their record winning streak at the World Cup finals to nine games with a 2-0 win over Australia, although they struggled to dominate and often came under fierce pressure.

Goals from Adriano and Fred secured Brazil's second round place, but listless striker Ronaldo was substituted for the second game running. Australia were left to rue wasted chances as substitute Harry Kewell missed one open goal and later shot just over the bar from long range.

In Sunday's other Group F game, Croatia and Japan both squandered opportunities in a goalless draw that hit both sides' chances of making it past the group stage. Keeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi was Japan's hero, diving low to his left to save a Darijo Srna penalty.

The climax of the day's action came in Leipzig, where South Korea grabbed a late goal for a 1-1 draw with France in a thrilling finish to their Group G game.

After just nine minutes, striker Thierry Henry slid a left-foot shot past Korean goalkeeper Lee Woon-jae for France's first goal at the finals since they crushed Brazil 3-0 in Paris to win the 1998 world title.

Twenty-three minutes later it should have been 2-0 when a Patrick Vieira header appeared to cross the line before being parried by Lee.

But France failed to capitalize on their momentum, and they paid the price for easing back when Park Ji-sung poked a spinning ball past keeper Fabien Barthez to equalize after 81 minutes.

Zinedine Zidane's substitution in injury time could mark his World Cup farewell—he will miss the next game with Togo after picking up his second yellow card.

France will certainly need to beat the West Africans to retain chances of progressing to the last 16.

Brazil's forlorn striker Ronaldo was also booked against Australia. Though he set up the opening goal for Adriano, he botched one chance and was involved in a heated touchline argument with coach Carlos Alberto Parreira. *Reuters*

Super-sub's deep cross lifts Korea to 1-1 draw

LEIPZIG—SOUTH KOREA SUPER-SUB SEOL Ki-Hyeon, whose deep cross set up Park Ji-Sung's opportunist equalizer in the 1-1 draw with France, said he reveled in the room given to him by the fading 1998 World Cup winners.

Coach Dick Advocaat sent on the Wolves winger after half-time and Seol worried the ageing French team with his pace and trickery.

French coach Raymond Domenech fielded the country's oldest ever international side with an average age of 30 years and 289 days and several players toiled late in the second half as South Korea surged forward.

One of the old stagers, 34-year-old defender Lilian Thuram, equaled Marcel Desailly's record of 116 appearances for Les Bleus but it was not a comfortable night for the Juventus star.

Seol's introduction was the second tactical masterstroke by Advocaat in the tournament after he gambled in the last 45 minutes against Togo by playing with four forwards when South Korea trailed 1-0.

The winner from substitute Ahn Jung-Hwan proved him right on that occasion and Seol repaid the coach's confidence in his ability with a sparkling 45 minutes against the French.

"I am very happy with the result and the way I played," said Seol, who was part of the South Korea team which rampaged to the semi-finals of the 2002 World Cup.

"The first half was very difficult for us but the French are not physically perfect and in the second half we got some chances.

"I was ready to play and Mr. Advocaat gave me the chance to show something. When I moved to the right side I felt more confident about winning the one-on-ones. *AFP*

WORLD Cup matches: From top left, clockwise: Japan's Alessandro Santos (left) and Croatia's Ivica Olic challenge for the ball in World Cup Group F in Nuremberg, Germany; Japan's goal keeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi makes a save on a penalty kick by Croatia's Dado Prso in Nuremberg; Brazil's goalkeeper Dida makes a save during the Brazil-Australia Group F match in Munich; Brazil's Fred jubilates after scoring the second goal for his team; South Korea players celebrate after Park Ji-Sung (7) scored a goal in a Group G match against France in Leipzig; and France's Zinedine Zidane (10) and South Korea's Kim Young-Chul (2) compete for the ball. AP

Japanese plot 'miracle win' over Brazilians

BONN—JAPAN MAY HAVE ONLY the slimmest of chances of beating Brazil for survival in the World Cup, but the Asian champions have not ruled out a "miracle win" over the five-time holders.

"Football throws up some unexpected results," Japan coach Zico said after the 0-0 draw against Croatia kept alive both sides' hopes to reaching the second round. "We know how good Brazil are, but we intend to give them a real battle."

"We are hanging on by the skin of our teeth," said goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi whose masterful save of a Croatian penalty kept a clean sheet for Japan in Nuremberg on Sunday.

"I will give all I have. Never mind if I'd get cramps and collapse," added the former Portsmouth keeper.

Kawaguchi repelled a barrage of shots—including a Roberto Carlos free kick—when Japan upset Brazil 1-0 in Miami in the first round of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

The victory, albeit at an under-age level, is fondly remembered at home as the "miracle of Miami."

Japan also take pride in a 2-2 draw against Brazil in the first round of the Confederations Cup in Germany a year ago.

"We should not be afraid just because our opponents are Brazil. We have experience of playing them before," Zico said.

In World Cup Group-F, Brazil reached the second round on Sunday by defeating Australia 2-0. The Australians beat Japan 3-1 in their opener. *AFP*

SOUTH Korean fans watch a live TV broadcast of the Korea-France showdown on a giant video installed in downtown Seoul. The match ended in a 1-1 draw. AFP

Thousands of fans celebrate close escape against French

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—AN EARLY morning kickoff didn't deter hundreds of thousands of South Korean soccer fans from reveling Monday in their narrow esc ape, after tying 1-1 with France to keep their World Cup dreams alive.

Although the match started at 4 a.m. local time, the streets of Seoul and cities across the country were still packed with "Red Devils," as South Korea's fans are known. Some 690,000 fans gathered outdoors nationwide, including 280,000 in Seoul, police said.

It was South Korea's star player Park Ji-sung who leveled the game, in the 81st minute, helping keep hopes alive that the country might repeat its performance in the 2002 World Cup when South Korea reached the semifinals.

"Although our team lacked much strategy in the first half of the game, I'm satisfied to see that with our relentless spirit our team at least tied with one of the best traditional soccer heavyweights," said Oh Jung-hwan, 50, who stayed up the whole night at Jamsil Olympics Stadium in Seoul.

Given the early starting time, some companies gave their workers Monday off while others reportedly called their staff in early so they could watch the game together.

"Because I understand my employees' enthusiasm for soccer, I gave them the half-day off so that they could cheer on our team freely," said Oh, who runs his own interior design company.

Others weren't so lucky. One group of high school students in uniforms were cheering early Monday with bloodshot eyes—matching the team's red strip—before heading to class. *AP*

Swathe of WC players sport tattoos

BERLIN—FIFA DIRECTIVES TO keep their shirt on after scoring might keep many of them under wraps, but the World Cup brings together a swathe of players who don't mind getting the needle—for the sake of sporting a tattoo.

The beneedled skin of England skipper David Beckham is well documented but he is far from alone among the 735 players taking part at the event.

Drawings, messages of undying love, children's names cover arms, backs, legs and necks, as well as other assorted regions.

Beckham famously has the names of sons Brooklyn, Romeo and Cruz as well as that of his wife, Victoria—in Hindi—on his forearm, though some linguistic experts say it contains inaccuracies.

Under Victoria's name—"it would look tacky if I had Victoria just in English," Beckham says—is the Latin phrase At Amem et Foveam, meaning that which I love and adore.

On one arm he also has his England number seven in Roman numerals—he wore the same number shirt at Manchester United but has worn 23 at Real Madrid—and a number of other additions including a winged guardian angel across the back of his neck and a Michelangelo angel on his right arm.

"My dad had three tattoos of his own and so the idea has been with me since I was a kid," the player once explained. *AFP*

BECKHAM AP

FIFA WORLD CUP GERMANY 2006

First Round

GROUP A

Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Ecuador	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
x-Germany	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Poland	2	0	0	2	0	3	0
Costa Rica	2	0	0	2	2	7	0
GROUP B							
x-England	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Sweden	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Trinidad	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
Paraguay	2	0	0	2	0	2	0
GROUP C							
x-Argentina	2	2	0	0	8	1	6
x-Netherlands	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Ivory Coast	2	0	0	2	2	4	0
Serbia	2	0	0	2	0	7	0
GROUP D							
x-Portugal	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Mexico	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Angola	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Iran	2	0	0	2	1	5	0
GROUP E							
Italy	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Czech Republic	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Ghana	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
United States	2	0	1	1	1	4	1
GROUP F							
x-Brazil	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Australia	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Croatia	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Japan	2	0	1	1	1	3	1
GROUP G							
Korea Republic	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
France	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Switzerland	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Togo	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
GROUP H							
Spain	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Saudi Arabia	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Tunisia	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Ukraine	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

x-advanced to second round

INQGRAPHICS LOUIE BACANI

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Brazil 2, Australia 0; France 1, South Korea 1; Croatia 0, Japan 0

TODAY'S MATCHES

Togo vs Switzerland—Dortmund;
Spain vs Tunisia—Stuttgart;
Saudi Arabia vs Ukraine—Hamburg

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

ENTERTAINMENT

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MTRCB reprimands GMA 7, ABS-CBN and F channel

'Lewd' footage should be seen in cultural context, says documentarian

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE MOVIE AND TELEVISION REVIEW and Classification Board (MTRCB) has reprimanded three channels: GMA 7 for the late-night documentary program "I-Witness"; ABS-CBN for the primetime reality show "Pinoy Big Brother: Teen Edition"; and F, channel 34 on Destiny Cable.

The MTRCB held an adjudication meeting with ABS-CBN officials last June 1 and with F and GMA 7 representatives last June 6.

In a memo dated May 10, five MTRCB agents complained that the F channel aired "on or about 2 p.m. on May 9" a "scene/portion wherein a male model [showed] his [genitals], covered with decorative material, as well as female models with their breasts exposed."

Meeting today

Such scenes, the agents had pointed out, "were not fit for TV viewing."

In a phone interview on Saturday, MTRCB chair Ma. Consoliza P. Laguardia said F channel had not responded to the complaint. "The channels have 10 days to respond after our last meeting."

The board is set to meet with the channel's representatives today.

The reunion show of ABS-CBN's "PBB" last June 4, according to Laguardia, aired words with double meaning.

"We are planning to invite 'PBB' representatives again, to prevent the repetition of the same mistakes," said Laguardia.

"The Sunday show was produced by a different group, not by the 'PBB' team. I wonder what the chair was referring to," TV director Laurenti Dyogi told Inquirer via SMS.

The MTRCB also summoned representatives of two other Kapamilya shows, "Home Boy" on ABS-CBN and "It's a Guy Thing" on Studio 23, for a meeting set today. Representatives of the GMA 7 sitcom "Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita" were also called to the same hearing.

Lastly, the complaint against GMA 7 centered on the "I-Witness" episode entitled "Lukayo: Hindi Ito Bastos," reported and anchored by Howie Severino.

Severino told Inquirer Entertainment in a phone interview on Saturday that the docu's goal was "to educate the public on an age-old tradition that was first documented by ethnologist and National Artist for Dance Ramon Obusan."

The "offending" footage involved fertility rituals, "masturbation" and wooden phalluses, according to the seven MTRCB agents who signed the complaint letter dated May 30.

The agents reported that the docu was "aired last May 22 around 11:30 p.m."

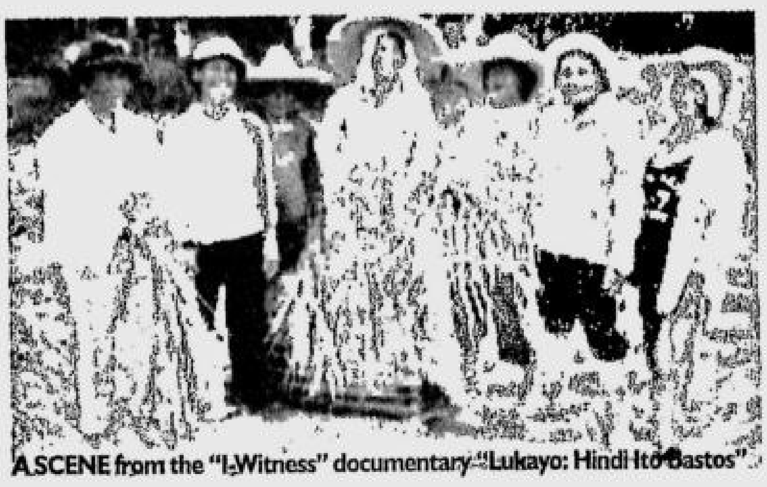
Severino corrected this in the network's "counter-affidavit," presented to the board on June 6, saying the "show was broadcast after midnight."

Severino said GMA 7's letter to the MTRCB reiterated that the docu should be seen in its "cultural context."

Laguardia acknowledged that "it presented a ritual, but the general public might not be used to such scenes. The producers should have 'solarized' or blurred those sensitive portions."

"We don't even agree [with the board]

MTRCB/ A2-2



A SCENE from the "I-Witness" documentary "Lukayo: Hindi Ito Bastos".

'Kinsey' uncut at Ayala cinemas

THE PROVOCATIVE-drama "Kinsey," starring Liam Neeson, Laura Linney, Peter Sarsgaard and Chris O'Donnell, will be shown in its original, uncut R-18 version exclusively at Ayala Malls Cinemas—Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt III—tomorrow.

The critically acclaimed film examines the life of Alfred Kinsey, a man driven to uncover the most private secrets of America.

Sexual behavior

Liam Neeson stars as Kinsey who, in 1948, changed American culture with his book, "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male."

Interviewing thousands of people about the most intimate aspects of their lives, Kinsey hoped to lift the weight of secrecy and shame from a society in which sexual practices were mostly hidden.

His work sparked one of the most intense cultural debates of the past century that still rages on today.

Global fame

The movie recounts the scientist's extraordinary journey from obscurity to global fame.

Kinsey and his team refined an interviewing technique that helps people to break through shame, fear, and guilt and speak freely about their sexual histories.

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GP

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G

4 LAKE HOUSE
1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
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EVEREST
11:00 02:00 05:00 8:00 11:00
NASCAR 3D
12:30 03:30 06:30 09:30
PREMIERE CINEMA
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
LAKE HOUSE
CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED
THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
CARS
GARFIELD 2
AMERICAN HAUNTING

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
LAKE HOUSE
CINEMA 2
GARFIELD 2

SM NORTH EDSA
XMEN III
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
GARFIELD 2
THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
AMERICAN HAUNTING

SM CITY BICUTAN
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
LAKE HOUSE
GARFIELD 2

SM MEGACINEMA
LAKE HOUSE
XMEN III
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
CARS
GARFIELD 2
AMERICAN HAUNTING
M:I:III
TAKE THE LEAD
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
THE OMEN
MANAY PO
INSIDE MAN

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
THE OMEN
CARS
TAKE THE LEAD
GARFIELD 2
XMEN III
THE OMEN
AMERICAN HAUNTING

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
AMERICAN HAUNTING
TAKE THE LEAD
MANAY PO
XMEN III
GARFIELD
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
FAST AND FURIOUS
CARS
LAKE HOUSE
THE OMEN
ALL ABOUT LOVE
INSIDE MAN

SM CITY DASMARINAS
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
BANDIDAS
THE OMEN

SM CITY STA. MESA
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
LAKE HOUSE
CARS
AMERICAN HAUNTING
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
THE OMEN
XMEN III
MANAY PO
GARFIELD 2
ALL ABOUT LOVE

SM CITY MANILA
THE OMEN
TAKE THE LEAD
LAKE HOUSE
XMEN III
CARS
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
INSIDE MAN
AMERICAN HAUNTING
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
GARFIELD 2

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
GARFIELD 2
LAKE HOUSE
CARS
THE OMEN
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
LAKE HOUSE
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
CHAOS

SM CITY SUCAT
LAKE HOUSE
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
GARFIELD 2

EVENT CALENDAR

SM CENTER stage

MAXMEDIA PRESENTS

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CINEMA 9
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SM MALL OF ASIA
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LUZON

SM CITY BAGUIO
LAKE HOUSE
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
GARFIELD 2
FAST AND FURIOUS 3

SM CITY MARILAO
CARS
THE OMEN
MANAY PO
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

SM CITY BACOOR
AMERICAN HAUNTING
GARFIELD 2
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
LAKE HOUSE
XMEN III
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
MANAY PO
CARS

SM CITY BATANGAS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
AQUAMARINE
ALL ABOUT LOVE

SM CITY LUCENA
SENTINEL
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
MANAY PO
ALL ABOUT LOVE

SM CITY CLARK
THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
MANAY PO
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
GARFIELD 2

SM CITY PAMPANGA
LAKE HOUSE
ALL ABOUT LOVE
GARFIELD 2
MANAY PO
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

SM CITY MOLINO
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
CARS
TAKE THE LEAD
INSIDE MAN

SM CITY STA. ROSA
CARS
XMEN III
THE OMEN
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
XMEN III
FAST AND FURIOUS 3
THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
SILENT HILL
ALL ABOUT LOVE
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
GARFIELD 2

SM CITY ILOILO
CHAOS
RESERVED
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
XMEN III
RESERVED
THE OMEN

SM CITY DAVAO
XMEN III
GARFIELD 2
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
CARS

SM CITY CAGAYAN
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
FAILURE TO LAUNCH
XMEN III

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

MTRCB chides GMA 7 . . .

From page A2-1

that it's masturbation," Severino countered. "It was a Lenten ritual involving flagellants in Cagayan province. It had nothing to do with sex."

Chapter IV of the MTRCB's Implementing Rules and Regulations defines an X-rated movie or TV show as one that depicts sexual content "in a patently lewd, offensive or demeaning manner."

"But that is subject to interpretation," Severino stressed.

Severino asserted that the documentary had "academic value. It's in the public interest. It's about our heritage. It can also be seen in light of gender politics."

Severino said that the network had planned "to submit to the MTRCB a second statement [yesterday], in which we would politely clarify our intent in airing the docu."

Songs about falling out . . .

From page A2-6

As for Alcantara, who hardly qualifies as a guitar hero, it would have to be his style of playing—simple, uncluttered, affecting.

Backed by a steady rhythm section, MYMP is a recipe for feel-good vibes and romantic persuasion.

But Fernandez, after doing a cover of "Every Little Thing She Does is Magic," a 1980s Police hit, pointed out: "This concert's title is not quite right, because what we're singing next are songs about falling out of love."

What we heard next was "Nakapagtataka," a Jim Paredes tune about failed relationships.

We deliberately mentioned the songwriters in the repertoire because Fernandez didn't seem to care that these covers were largely responsible for the fame MYMP has been basking in.

It was the opposite of how concert guest Nyoy Volante treated his performance. In a playful reference to the Apo, Volante introduced his jazz-inflected version of "Panalangin" by saying: *"Eto galing sa mga sinaunang boy bands."*

To underscore the irony of the concert title, Volante and Fernandez proceeded to interpret an achingly sad Phil Collins original, "Separate Lives." The crowd loved it!

In the end it all made sense. Never mind who wrote what.

Glamorous memories of a long-lost H'wood

LOS ANGELES—JUST A COUPLE of weeks before turning 90, actress Olivia de Havilland has returned to bask in Hollywood glory.

And her latest close-up—at a tribute to her work by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Thursday night (Friday in Manila)—was a roaring success. She had an audience of film industry movers and shakers leaping to their feet to applaud the screen legend and her tales of a long-lost Hollywood.

De Havilland, a luminous beauty who won hearts as Melanie in "Gone with the Wind" and two Oscars for tragic turns in "To Each His Own" and "The Heiress," made her entrance walking briskly down the aisle of the Samuel Goldwyn Theater.

The actress, born to British parents in 1916 and raised in California along with her sister, actress Joan Fontaine, looked elegant in a chic cream-colored silk suit, matching pumps and three strands of plump pearls. Her clear brown eyes and radiant skin belied her age.

On stage she sat through a series of clips from her greatest movies and then discussed a life that included on-screen pairings with the likes of Errol Flynn, Montgomery Clift and Richard Burton.

Remembering Flynn

Signed by Warner Bros. in 1935 to a seven-year contract, the raven-haired actress starred opposite Flynn in "Captain Blood." She was 18, he was 26.

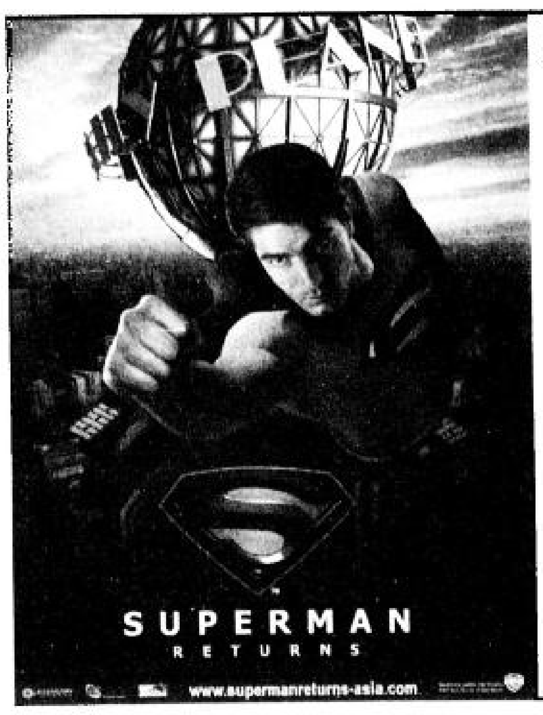
The pair made eight films, the last being Raoul Walsh's 1941 drama about George Custer, "They Died With Their Boots On."

Of that film, she said, "There was a real grief when we made that. I felt the same way the next day and the day after that. And many, many years later I realized this would be the last picture I would make with Errol."

But as to whether the movie romance bloomed off-

REMINISCING/ A2-5

THEN AND NOW: Olivia de Havilland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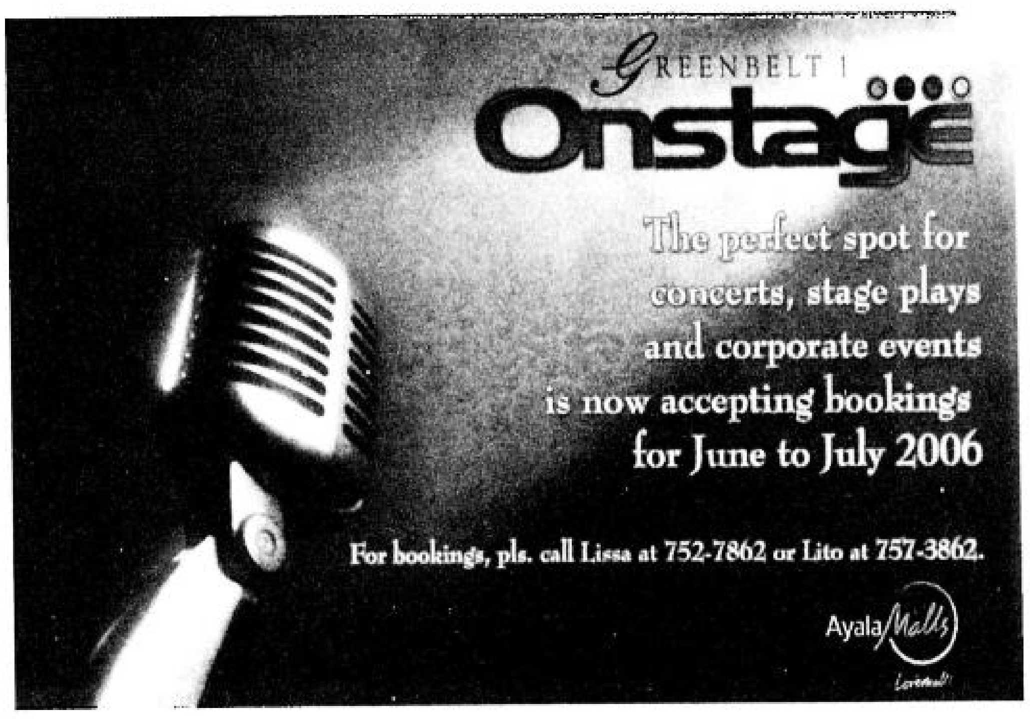
Ayala Malls CINEMAS


GREENBELT 1
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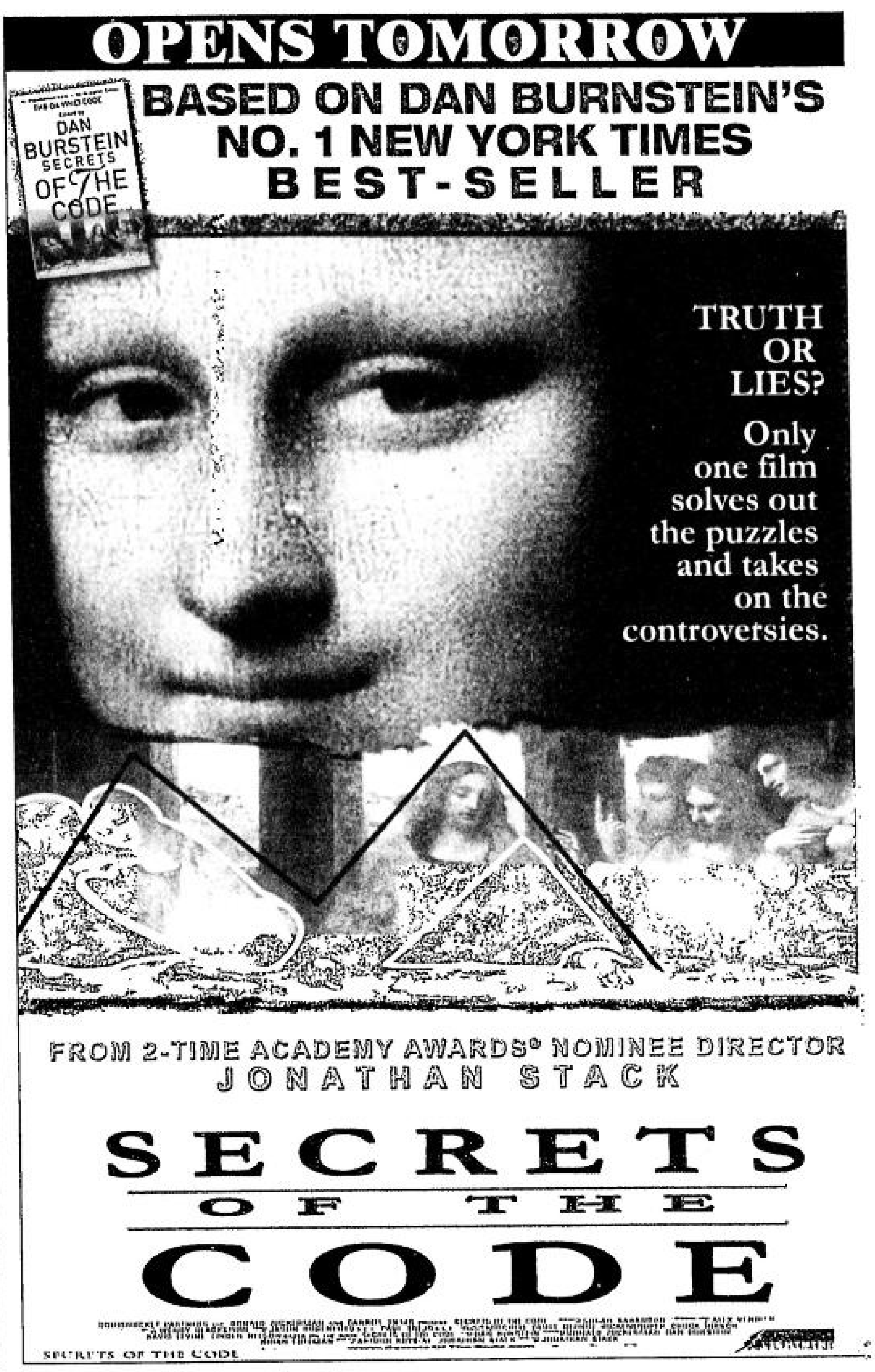
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FROM 2-TIME ACADEMY AWARDS® NOMINEE DIRECTOR JONATHAN STACK
SECRETS OF THE CODE

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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1	GLORIETTA 1	AN AMERICAN HAUNTING	CARS	THE LAKE HOUSE	KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO			
G4	GLORIETTA 4	GARFIELD 2	CARS	THX THE FAST & THE FURIOUS TOKYO DRIFT GUARANTEED SEATS	TAKE THE LEAD	THE INSIDE MAN	THE LAKE HOUSE	THE OMEN
GB1	GREENBELT 1	THE OMEN	THE LAKE HOUSE					
GB3	GREENBELT 3	THX CARS 1:05, 3:30, 5:55, 8:20, 10:40 GUARANTEED SEATS	THX THE LAKE HOUSE 2:40, 4:50, 7:00, 9:10, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	THE OMEN 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	INSIDE MAN 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	GARFIELD 1:25, 3:20, 5:15, 7:10, 9:05, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX THE LAKE HOUSE	CARS	GARFIELD 2	THE OMEN	AMERICAN HAUNTING		
ACC	AYALA CENTER CEBU	THE LAKE HOUSE	GARFIELD 2	THE FAST & THE FURIOUS TOKYO DRIFT	SILENT HILL			
M2	MARKET! MARKET!	THE LAKE HOUSE	THE OMEN	AN AMERICAN HAUNTING	KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO	GARFIELD 2		

At the Activity Center

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Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
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GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
German Month Celebration June 19 to 21, 2006	JAB Boxing Exhibit June 23 to 25, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Children's Hour Program June 21, 2006	Sony Summer Pleasures 2006 June 19 to July 12, 2006

GREENBELT
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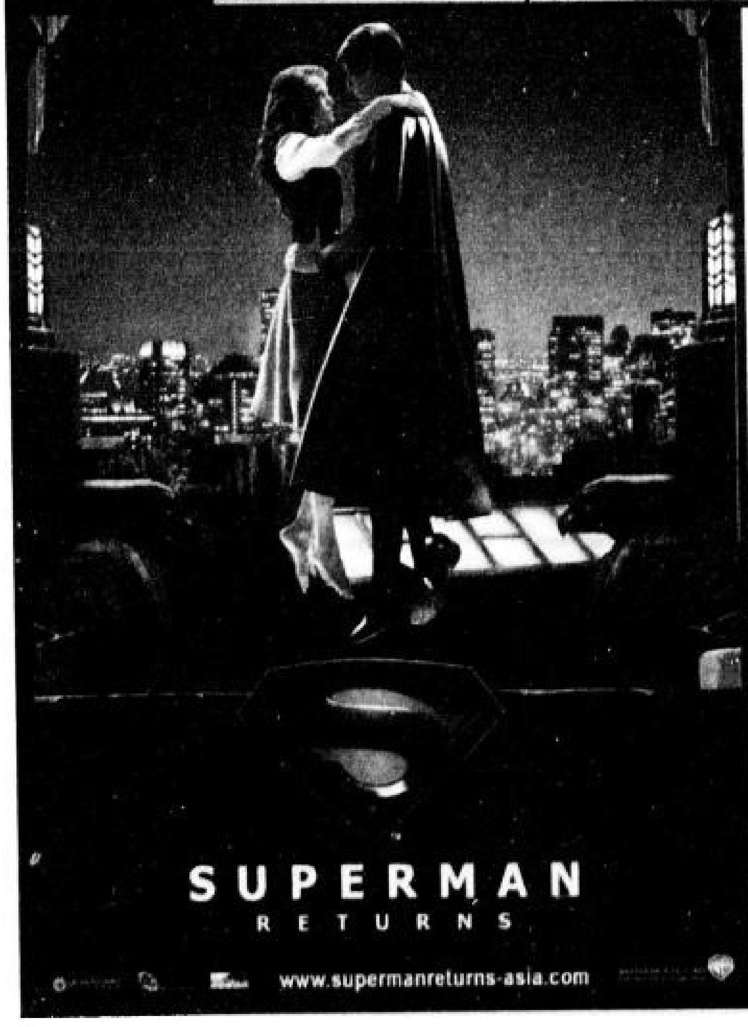
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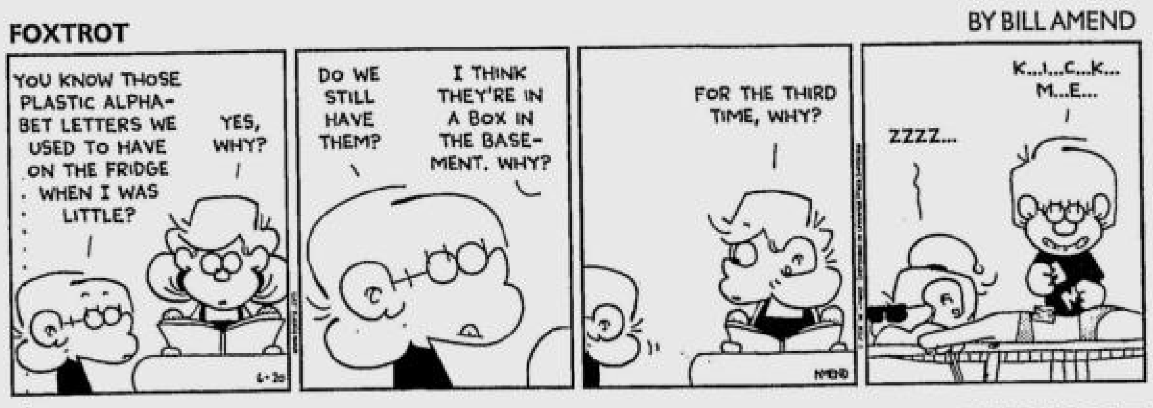
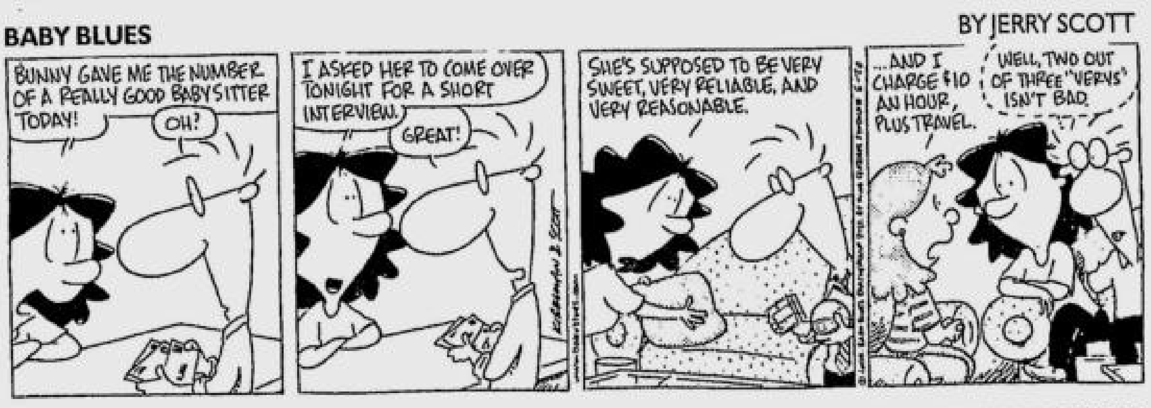
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


YOU KNOW THOSE PLASTIC ALPHABET LETTERS WE USED TO HAVE ON THE FRIDGE WHEN I WAS LITTLE?
YES, WHY?
DO WE STILL HAVE THEM?
I THINK THEY'RE IN A BOX IN THE BASEMENT. WHY?
FOR THE THIRD TIME, WHY?
ZZZZ...
K...I...C...K... M...E...

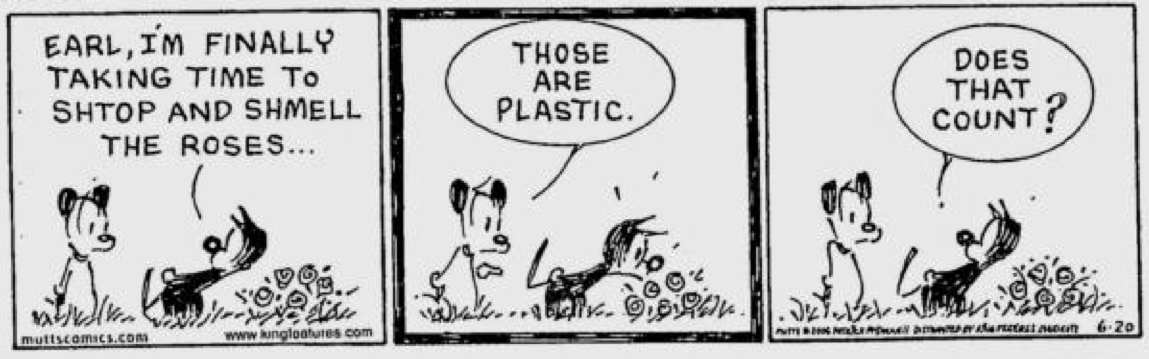
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BUNNY GAVE ME THE NUMBER OF A REALLY GOOD BABYSITTER TODAY!
OH?
I ASKED HER TO COME OVER TONIGHT FOR A SHORT INTERVIEW.
GREAT!
SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE VERY SWEET, VERY RELIABLE, AND VERY REASONABLE.
...AND I CHARGE $10 AN HOUR, PLUS TRAVEL.
WELL, TWO OUT OF THREE "VERYS" ISN'T BAD.

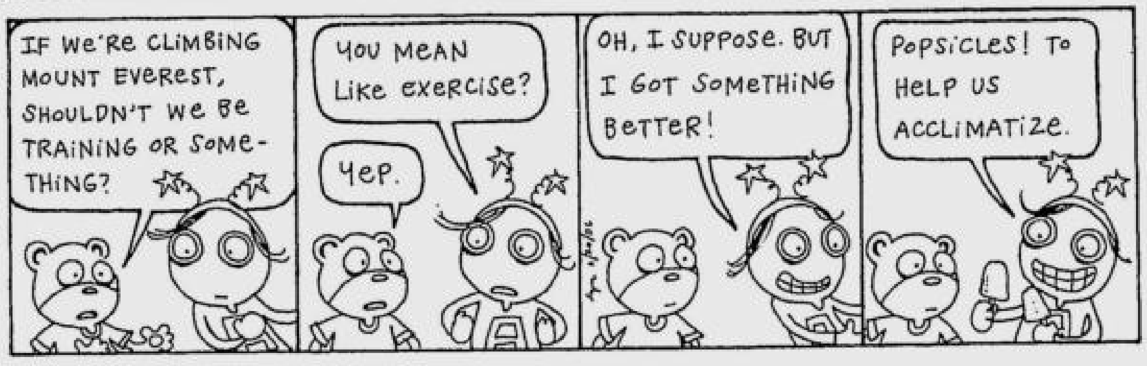
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL, I'M FINALLY TAKING TIME TO SHTOP AND SHMELL THE ROSES...
THOSE ARE PLASTIC.
DOES THAT COUNT?
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
6-20

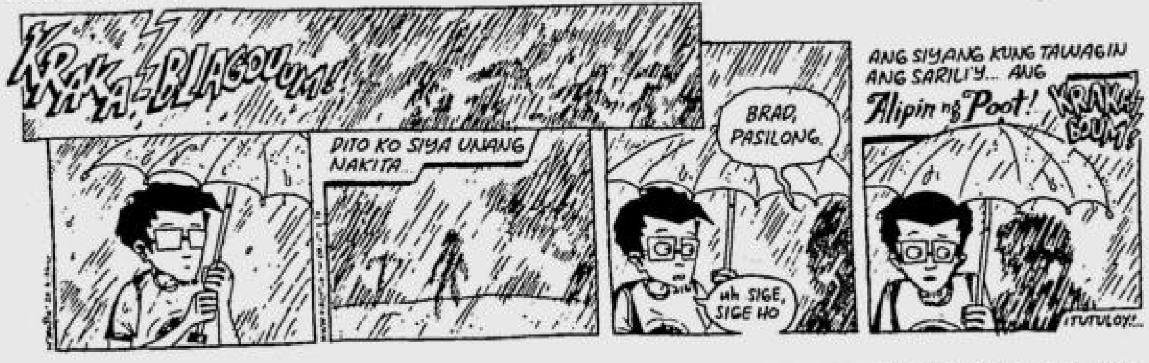
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


IF WE'RE CLIMBING MOUNT EVEREST, SHOULDN'T WE BE TRAINING OR SOMETHING?
YOU MEAN LIKE EXERCISE?
YEP.
OH, I SUPPOSE. BUT I GOT SOMETHING BETTER!
POPSICLES! TO HELP US ACCLIMATIZE.

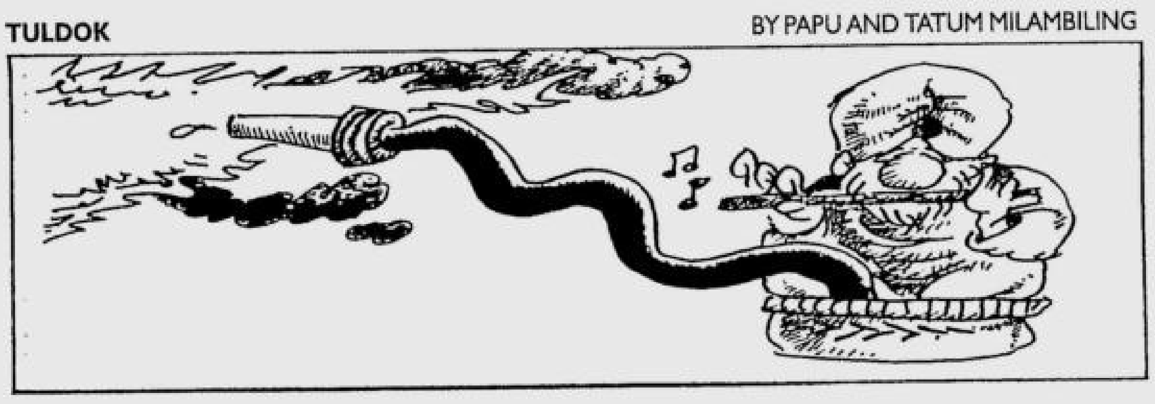
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KRAKA-BLAGOUUM!
DITO KO SIYA UNANG NAKITA...
BRAD, PASILONG.
uh SIGE, SIGE HO
ANG SIYANG KUNG TAWAGIN ANG SARILI'Y... ANG Alipin ng Poot!
KRAKA-BOOM!
ITUTULOY!...

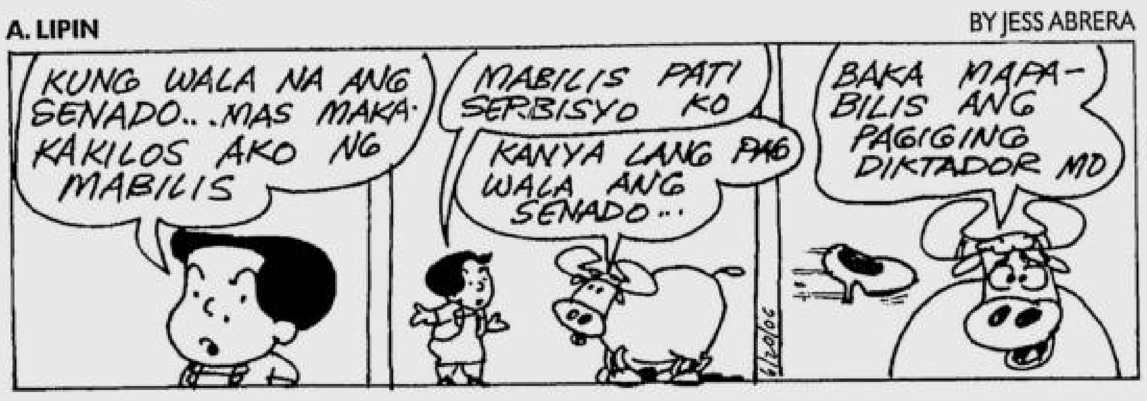
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



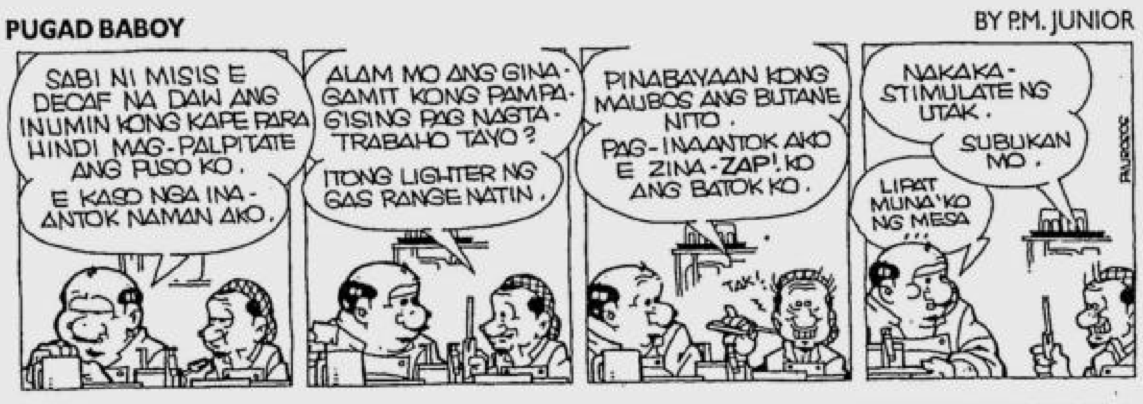
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KUNG WALA NA ANG SENADO...MAS MAKAKAKILOS AKO NG MABILIS
MABILIS PATI SERBISYO KO
KANYA LANG PAG WALA ANG SENADO...
BAKA MAPABILIS ANG PAGIGING DIKTADOR MO
6/20/06

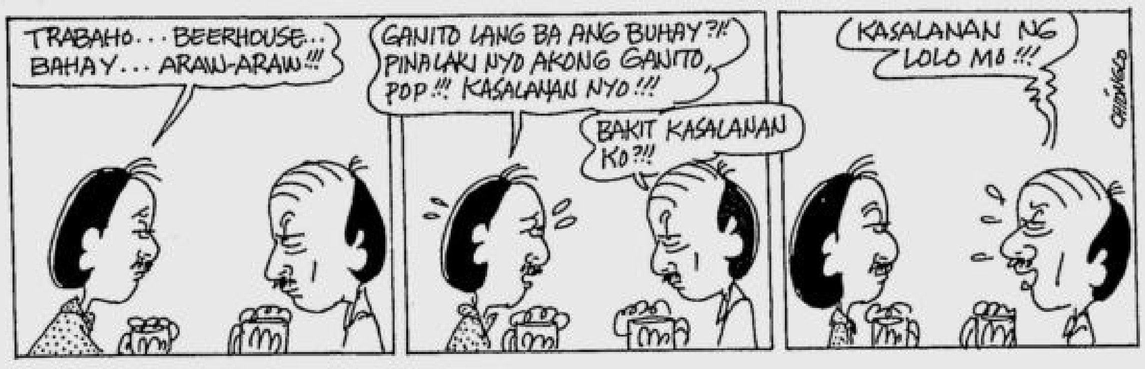
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SABI NI MISIS E DECAF NA DAW ANG INUMIN KONG KAPE PARA HINDI MAG-PALPITATE ANG PUSO KO.
E KASO NGA INA-ANTOK NAMAN AKO.
ALAM MO ANG GINAGAMIT KONG PAMPAGISING PAG NAGTATRABAHO TAYO?
ITONG LIGHTER NG GAS RANGE NATIN.
PINABAYAAN KONG MAUBOS ANG BUTANE NITO.
PAG-INAANTOK AKO E ZINA-ZAP! KO ANG BATOK KO.
TAK!
NAKAKA-STIMULATE NG UTAK.
SUBUKAN MO.
LIPAT MUNA'KO NG MESA...

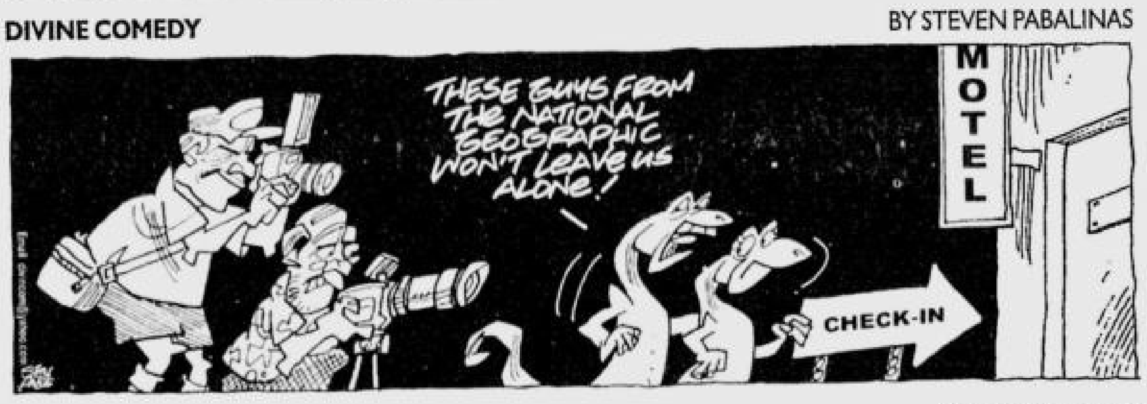
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


TRABAHO... BEERHOUSE.. BAHAY... ARAW-ARAW!!!
GANITO LANG BA ANG BUHAY?!! PINALAKI NYO AKONG GANITO, POP!!! KASALANAN NYO!!!
BAKIT KASALANAN KO?!!
KASALANAN NG LOLO MO!!!

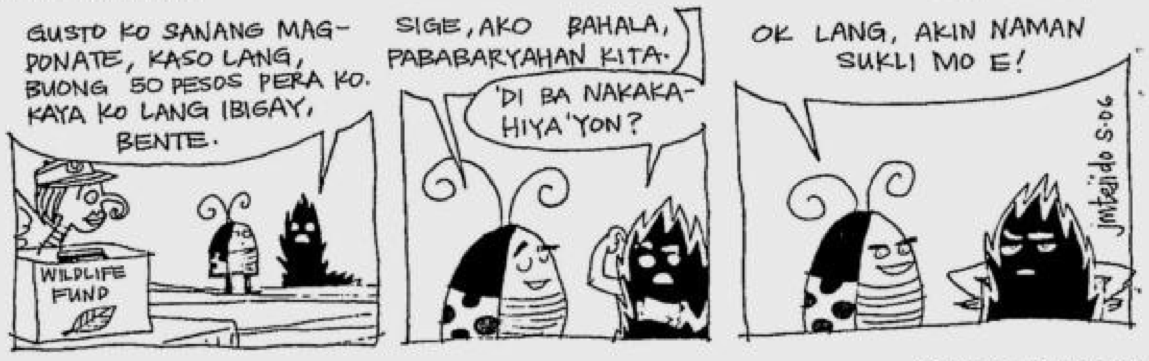
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


THESE GUYS FROM THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC WON'T LEAVE US ALONE!
MOTEL
CHECK-IN

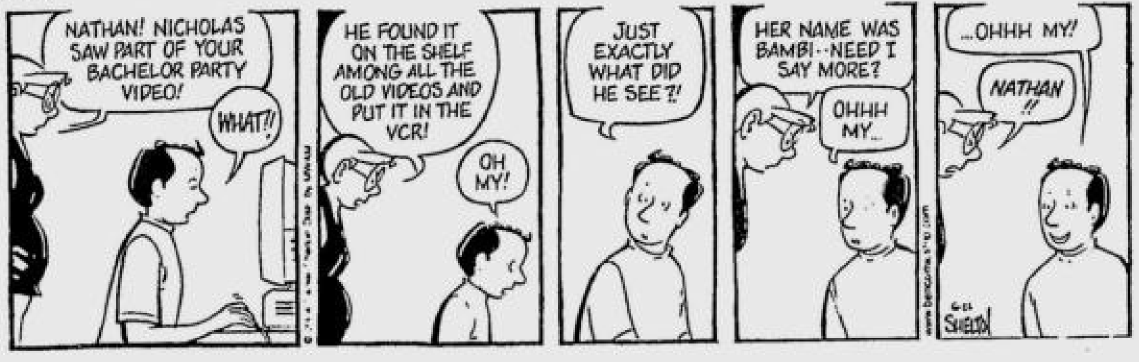
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

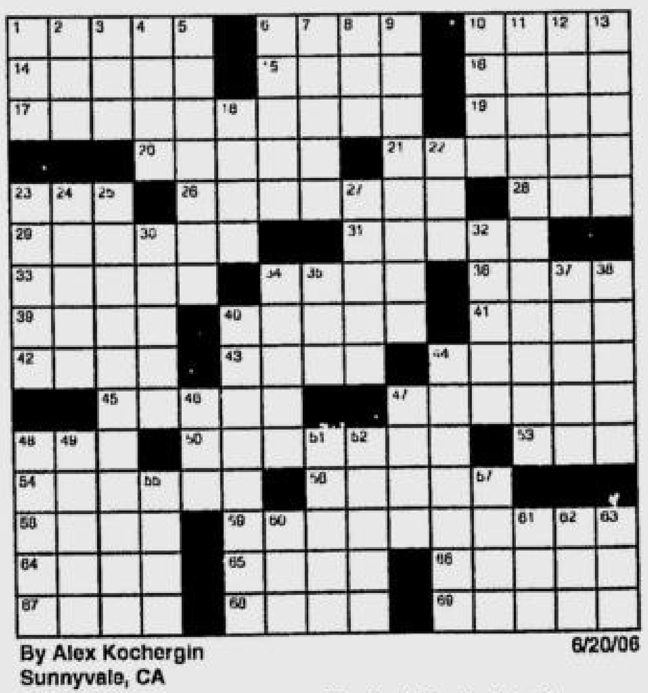

GUSTO KO SANANG MAG-DONATE, KASO LANG, BUONG 50 PESOS PERA KO. KAYA KO LANG IBIGAY, BENTE.
WILDLIFE FUND
SIGE, AKO BAHALA, PABABARYAHAN KITA.
'DI BA NAKAKAHIYA 'YON?
OK LANG, AKIN NAMAN SUKLI MO E!
jmtejido 5-06

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NATHAN! NICHOLAS SAW PART OF YOUR BACHELOR PARTY VIDEO!
WHAT?!
HE FOUND IT ON THE SHELF AMONG ALL THE OLD VIDEOS AND PUT IT IN THE VCR!
OH MY!
JUST EXACTLY WHAT DID HE SEE?!
HER NAME WAS BAMBI--NEED I SAY MORE?
OHHH MY...
...OHHH MY!
NATHAN!!
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alex Kochergin
Sunnyvale, CA

6/20/06

ACROSS

1 Mirth
6 Mimics
10 Long-nosed fish
14 Blackjack request
15 Gift-tag word
16 Old-time music halls
17 Unyielding
19 Sweet tubers
20 Ancient marketplace
21 Pal of Porthos and Athos
23 __-o'-shanter
26 Makes beloved
28 Pig residence
29 July 26th honoree
31 Rope on the range
33 Fancy tie
34 Skater Michelle
36 Numbered musical piece
39 Peruse a paragraph
40 "Knots" author
41 Lhasa __
42 Actress Thompson
43 Say it __ so!
44 Layabout
45 Coeur d'__, ID
47 State categorically
48 American uncle
50 Part-time athlete
53 Draft letters
54 Hogs the mirror
56 Simon and Young
58 Seep
59 Hawaiian nuts
64 Sign of the future
65 Lat. list-ender
66 Human trunk
67 Rendered fat
68 Legendary loch
69 Discharge

DOWN

1 Half a dance?
2 Concealed
3 Letter from Greece
4 Mrs. Peel of "The Avengers"
5 Chemical tester
6 Broadcast talent org.
7 King of Troy
8 Long time
9 Vilifying
10 "The Third of May, 1808" painter
11 Male features
12 Send payment
13 Impertinent
18 Nary a soul
22 Mandela's nat.
23 Ex-rulers of Russia
24 Perplexed
25 Asphalt paver
27 Praying figure
30 Of a junction
32 Warty amphibians
34 Deejay Casey
35 Take first place
37 Software buyers
38 Arranges by category
40 Some tennis officials
44 Place alone
46 Clairvoyance letters
47 Dry
48 Small cylinder
49 Odor
51 Andes people
52 Rings
55 Repair
57 Smelly, dirty air
60 Goddess of folly
61 Anger
62 Pompous person
63 Drunkard

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	E	D	G	E	■	O	S	L	O	■	A	C	T	S
C	L	E	A	T	■	E	T	A	L	■	P	E	R	U
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B	E	E	R	B	A	R	R	E	L	P	O	L	K	A
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6/20/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're charismatic, charming and highly intelligent. Because you genuinely like people, your warm heart shows. You're comfortable in the limelight. You're a natural leader with excellent organizational skills. Privately, you need close relationships. After the age of 30, you become more dramatic and flamboyant. This year, increased solitude allows you to learn something valuable and important.

Birthdate of: Nicole Kidman, actress; Martin Landau, actor; Lionel Richie, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Do not lose sight of the fact that this year you benefit from the wealth and good will of others. Accept favors and gifts. Don't worry about attached strings. Just say "thank you."

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Partnerships and close friendships can give you much joy this year. Be open to all possibilities. Don't hold back. Don't be shy. Take a chance on something good!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Without question, you can improve your job this year. Either your duties will change or your nasty boss will leave—or you'll get a completely different job. Something will happen.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Parties, fun, romance and vacations are the theme song for this year for your sign. Make sure you schedule time for play and creative fun. Flirt a little!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Everything having to do with home, family and your domestic life makes you feel blessed this year. You appreciate where you live. You appreciate the good relations you're enjoying with family members

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Because everything in life begins with a thought, the fact that you're positive and optimistic this year is the seed of your future success. Great!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your financial scene definitely improves this year. Many of you will earn more, and all of you are certainly spending more.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): In many ways, this is one of the luckiest years you've had in more than a decade. You're in the right time at the right place saying the right thing to the right person.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This year you will deal well with large organizations, especially the government. But privately, you're getting in touch with a values system that matters to you

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your popularity rating is way up this year! Everyone wants to see your face. Enjoy good times with friends. Join clubs, groups and organizations.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your career is looking swell! VIPs, bosses and important people notice you. Furthermore, all kinds of opportunities are coming your way. You're in a position of power and respect.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Many of you will make great strides in publishing, education, medicine and the law this year. Others will travel to new places and foreign lands. All of you will learn more now.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

			5		7			
2	7	5				1	6	4
1								8
5			9		2			3
		4				2		
8			7		3			1
6								2
9	1	7				4	8	6
			6		4			

Difficulty Level ★★

6/20

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	9	5	4	3	8	6	2	1
4	6	2	9	5	1	8	7	3
1	3	8	7	6	2	9	5	4
6	1	7	2	9	3	4	8	5
8	2	4	1	7	5	3	6	9
3	5	9	8	4	6	7	1	2
2	4	3	5	8	7	1	9	6
9	8	1	6	2	4	5	3	7
5	7	6	3	1	9	2	4	8

Difficulty Level ★

Engaging mix of fun and good sense

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

It's the way to go for this new teen program

EVERY SATURDAY AFTERNOON, Channel 2 is telecasting a new show about and for teenagers, "Let's Go." We caught the comedy show for the first time last June 10, and liked it for its brisk pacing, varied situations and perky performances.

"Let's Go" deserves to be encouraged because it gives some 10 starlets a chance to strut their thespic stuff for viewers to like or sniff at. From the looks of it, some of the show's relatively unknown performers have what it takes to eventually become young stars.

This is an encouraging departure from usual TV practice, which is to load a show with as many star names as possible, leaving "mere" starlets very few opportunities to do any real acting.

CATHY Gonzaga

TIMMY Boy Sta. Maria

On "Let's Go," there aren't any big stars around, so the lead starlets have the run of the show, and they make full use of the rare opportunity to impress and delight viewers.

Last June 10, the episode focused on scenes set in a bar and dorm. On the negative side, the situations pretty much showed teenagers having a fun but vapid time, more concerned with looking fashionable than thinking straight and doing what's right.

More positively, however, the show came up with insights into teens who waste their time in nightly "gimmicks," bully others into whining submission, and come to bitchy and wrong conclusions about someone's sexual orientation.

"Let's Go" is produced mainly to entertain teen viewers, but the occasional thematic points it makes are welcome. Let's hope that the teen show sustains its engaging mix of fun and good sense in the months to come. —That's the way to go!

New films on view

WATCH out for these promising new movies: "Kinsey," with **Liam Neeson** as pioneering sex researcher Alfred Kinsey. In the "psycho-sexual drama," Kinsey is shown treading into new territory with boldness, courage and daring. It's sexy stuff, but the movie also works hard to shed light on the dark corners of sexual psychology.

"Lady in the Water" started out as a story that filmmaker **M. Night Shyamalan** first thought up for his children.

In the film, Cleveland Heep (**Paul Giamatti**) has been trying to disappear. But, on the night that irrevocably changes his life, he finds someone else hidden in his modest apartment building—a mysterious young woman named Story (**Bryce Dallas Howard**). She has been living in the passageways beneath the building's swimming pool.

Cleveland discovers that Story is a "narf"—a nymph-like creature from a bedtime story who is being stalked by vicious creatures determined to prevent her from making the treacherous journey from this world back to hers.

Thus, Cleveland and Story must work together to decipher a series of clues that will unlock the pathway to her freedom. But the window of opportunity for Story to return home is closing rapidly, so Cleveland will have to face the demons that have been hounding them, if they hope to succeed in their dangerous attempt to save her world—and ours.

PAUL Giamatti and Bryce Dallas Howard in "Lady in Water"

"The Devil Wears Prada" stars **Meryl Streep** and **Anne Hathaway** in a story set in the quixotic, psychedelic world of high fashion.

'Mga Premyadong Dula'

LITO **Casaje**'s book of award-winning plays, "Mga Premyadong Dula," was launched last June 6 at the Main Theater lobby of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The collection features five contemporary plays—"Juan dela Cruz, New York City," "Editoryal," "Separasyon," "Matrimonyal" and "Padre de Familia."

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Long-lost H'wood

From page A2-3

screen, the lady now with snow-white hair, wouldn't say.

"I'd seen 'Robin Hood' in Paris in 1959 and wrote Errol a letter, telling him how wonderful I thought it was. But I didn't send it and very much wish I had."

She said the last time she saw the Tasmanian-born swashbuckler was at a gala later that year, where she felt someone kiss her on the back of her neck, but she didn't recognize him at first.

"He said, 'It's Errol.' 'Errol who?' I asked. It was his eyes. They used to be merry, but now they were troubled. There was something dead about him."

With that, de Havilland's voice, still resonant and instantly recognizable, choked a bit as she said, "He died two weeks later."

Happy retiree

De Havilland has been retired from acting since appearing in a TV movie, "The Woman He Loved," in 1988.

Having lived in Paris for the past half-century, the actress said she works on needlepoint, which she picked up while co-starring with Clift in the William Wyler-directed film from 1949, "The Heiress."

Asked about her favorite role, she replied: "I felt 'Gone with the Wind' would last five years, and it's lasted over 50, and into a new millennium. There is a special place in my heart for that film and Melanie." *Victoria Looseleaf, Reuters*

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CARS 11:00 / 1:30 / 4:00 / 7:30 / 9:00	AMERICAN HAUNTING 1:05 / 3:15 / 5:25 / 7:35 / 9:45	OMEN 666 12:00 / 2:30 / 5:00 / 7:35 / 10:00	
TAKE THE LEAD 12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 INSIDE MAN 7:30 / 10:00	THE DA VINCI CODE 7:00 / 10:00 X MEN 3 12:30 / 2:40 / 4:50	THE FAST & THE FURIOUS 3 1:00 / 3:15 / 5:30 / 7:45 / 10:00	THE LAKE HOUSE 12:45 / 2:55 / 5:05 / 7:15 / 9:25

Ali MALL CINEMAS

1	KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO 12:05 / 2:15 / 4:25 / 6:35 / 8:45	2	THE LAKE HOUSE 12:20 / 2:20 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35	3	THE FAST & THE FURIOUS 3 11:50 / 2:05 / 4:20 / 6:35 / 8:50
4	AMERICAN HAUNTING 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40	5	GARFIELD 2 12:15 R3 / 1:45 / 3:55 / 6:20 / 8:30		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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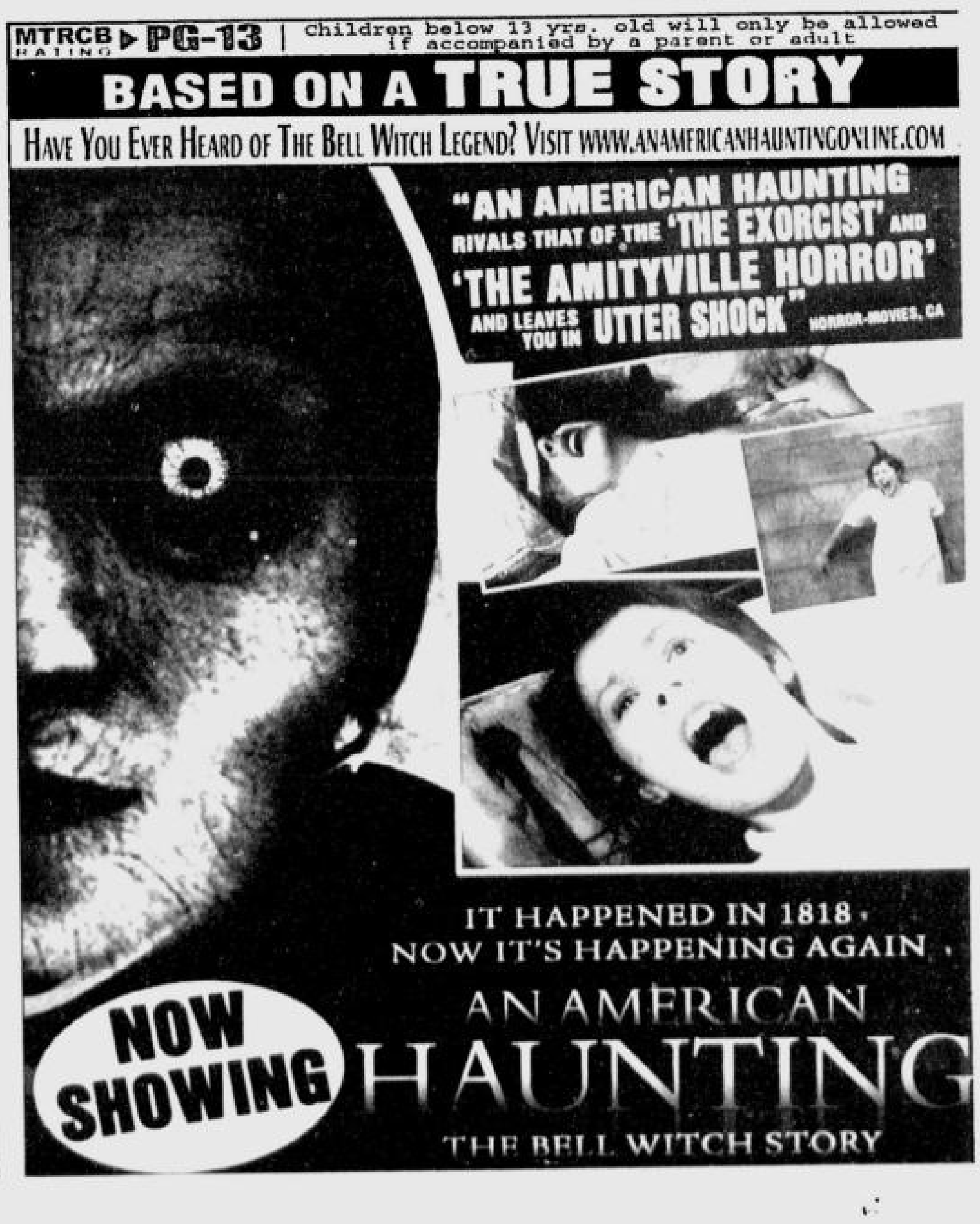
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AGA Muhlach with twins Atasha and Andres

Aga is 'Ulirang Ama' awardee

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I'VE KNOWN AGA MUHLACH long before his "Bagets" days. Now, he has adorable twin *bagets* of his own—4-year-old **Atasha** and **Andres**. He also has an older son, **Igi Boy**, with **Janice de Belen**. As a friend, Morning (his petname) is the kind who always makes his presence felt. He is never absent from your life. I'm touched when he calls out of the blue just to check on me when I'm embroiled in one or another controversy. If he is that attuned as a friend, you can just imagine what he's like as a dad.

That's why it's no surprise that Aga received the "Ulirang Ama Award 2006" from the National Mother's Day & Father's Day Foundation, Inc. on June 18. Considered the most prestigious award that could be given to an outstanding Filipino father, the distinction was given to Aga for his significant achievements as an actor and father. "I'm overwhelmed," he gushed. "This recognition means more to me than any acting award."

Aga describes himself as a hands-on dad. "**Charlene** and I make sure that we are the first persons our kids see when they wake up."

All his waking hours are truly spent being Aga—*ang Ama*.

Bow.

EDDIE Garcia

Eddie's impact

I HAVE always been in awe of **Eddie Garcia**. I remember when I used to tag along with my Mom during her "See-True" days, that Tito Eddie's snappy answers on the show always made an impact on me. For instance, his take on billing concerns was, "I don't make a fuss about billing. As long as my name is spelled correctly, that's all that matters."

It was such a delight to touch base with him during the presscon of "I Wanna Be Happy." He plays a man whose wife (**Gloria Romero**) decides to leave him just when they are about to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. How would he handle such a situation if it happened to him in real life?

"I'd let her go. It's useless to keep loving someone who no longer feels the same way for you. I've come this far in life to realize that you cannot force things to happen. Just let nature take its course."

Take it from this well-respected veteran, who has always known how to go with the flow. Now his heart overflows with all the lessons he spreads around so well.

Dynamic duo

TELEVISION and live comedy concert scene's dynamic duo, **Jose Manalo** and **Wally Bayota**, spread wacky cheers and comic flair in their debut CD, "Jose & Wally Try Mo Lang!," under Sony BMG. In between dishing out tunes like "Multong Bakla," "Feeling Pogi," and "Kring Song," they throw in riotous exchanges. Jose and Wally are no overnight successes. Their popularity is a product of years of struggle and hard work. Catch them at SM San Lazaro, June 23, SM Bacoor, June 24, Sta. Lucia East, June 25, Klownz Quezon Avenue, June 27, and SM Valenzuela, June 30.

PAULEEN Luna

Sugar & Spice Girl

I ASKED **Pauleen Luna** how she trimmed down. "I avoid spicy food—so when I was in Singapore for a week, I could hardly eat a thing. *Pumayat ako bigla!*" she revealed. What about the spice in her love life? Is she really dating cager **Mac Cardona** of Talk and Text? She smiled, "We are just textmates, though I'd like to get to know him more." Will they be the next show biz-PBA pair or have we had enough of hardcourt hard sell "love teams"?

Ruffa, May I?

RUFA **Mae Quinto** and **Erik Santos** were spotted being very lovey-dovey in Esquinita. I texted Rufa for the real score but she hasn't replied. Either she's too busy, or too happy, to text back. Will their budding romance finally dispel nasty rumors that Erik is gay? With Ruffa Mae's sex appeal, how can any gay guy not turn into a mean man even just for the feel and thrill of it?

Forget her not

DOES **Iwa Moto** have amnesia? A production staff member told me that he finds it strange that Iwa is chummy with him on the set but doesn't seem to recognize him at all when they bump into each other elsewhere. Or are her chinky eyes causing vision problems? For a newcomer in the biz, that's a dangerous sign. Can you picture what she'd be like, should she become a big star? She'd better be kind to all the people she meets on her way up ... because they are the same people she'll meet on her way down.

Punch

Whether ABS-CBN admits it or not, "Panday" didn't live up to expectations—that's why it was short-lived. Hopefully, **Jericho Rosales** will be able to get the punch back in his career via "Pacquiao The Movie." Echo may have been knocked down for a while but not knocked out.

Marquez mystique

Got a call from my fave *kumpare* **Joey (Marquez)**. He was asking me what my source told me about the Embassy incident which I wrote about in my previous column. I shot back "You tell me! You were there when your ex Alicia created a scene, right?" Like the true gentleman that he is, Joey said, "I don't want it to come from me." It turns out that Alicia saw him with another woman—that's why she flared up. Needless to say, she isn't over him. The Joey Marquez mystique lives on long after he leaves a woman. Hmm... I wish I could tell you why but I promised Joey to keep the MISStery a secret.

Just friends

JC DE Vera seemed shocked when I cornered him and asked, "Is Aifa of Sexbomb your girlfriend?" He gave the usual showbiz answer of ... just being her friend. But something in his eyes told me what he could not say. To (J) C is to believe?

Personal

THANKS a mil to ever-gracious Mother **Ricky Reyes** and his efficient staff at Megamall—**Tess Sotto, Gina Laco, Elyn Obera** and **Cocoy** for the red-carpet treatment.

(E-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com)

Late-night news comes early

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"BANDILA," ABS-CBN's REFORMATTED late-night newscast, will now be aired at an earlier time slot, 10:30, starting July 3.

This development is to be announced today by Eugenio Gabriel Lopez III, network chair; Charo Santos, channel head and executive vice president; and Maria Ressa, senior vice president and head of News and Current Affairs.

Ressa gave INQUIRER Entertainment a first look at the reprogramming or "re-gridding" of the late-night lineup.

INQUIRER initially broke the story on May 28, after three late-night Current Affairs shows—"Pipol," "Kontrobersyal" and "Payong Kapatid"—were rumored to be facing cancellation.

Big risk

While "Payong Kapatid" was turned into a segment on the morning program "Magandang Umaga Pilipinas," "Pipol" and "Kontrobersyal" will soon stop airing, Ressa confirmed.

After "many weeks of planning," the network is unveiling more "changes" in its evening lineup.

Head of Current Affairs Luchi Cruz-Valdez said the earlier newscast is "an act of leadership."

"It's a big risk," Ressa noted. "We are making a bet that Filipino viewers want to receive information while they are still awake."

Media critics have lamented that late-night newscasts came in much too late, at 12 midnight, and Current Affairs programs, even later at 1 a.m.

"We are responding to a clamor," Valdez said.

Valdez admitted that this move entails a huge sacrifice. "We are going up against Entertainment shows on the other channels," she said.

Moreover, Valdez said, there is the risk of losing revenues from advertisers who prefer Entertainment shows over N&CA programs.

Judgment call

"We are making a judgment call as a full network," Ressa explained. "In the Philippines, news is only 20 percent of the entire content; entertainment, 80 percent. [But] we got everyone's blessing, including the Entertainment people."

The "re-gridding," Ressa said, "represents the changes in our newsroom in the past year, it pushes our vision statement: excellent journalism ... [in the service of] nation-building."

Three days in the work week, the 30-minute newscast is to be followed by a one-hour Current Affairs program—making it "an hour and a half of N&CA on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday," Valdez said.

"Entertainment kept only two days: Monday and Friday," Ressa said. "The three Current Affairs shows that have been retained are 'The Correspondents' (Tuesday), 'S.O.C.O.' or 'Scene of the Crime Operatives' (Wednesday), and 'Probe' (Thursday)."

MYMP POI PHOTO

Songs about falling out of love

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

REVIEW

... seem to do just as well for loyal fans of MYMP

THE BOOMING LOCAL MUSIC SCENE has spilled over to include cinemas as concert venues.

At the SM Megamall, a recent gig featuring MYMP attracted a full-house crowd of teenagers, twentysomethings and young couples. Thirty minutes before show time, the line that snaked through the cinema lobby was so long, for a second we thought we were going to lose our seats.

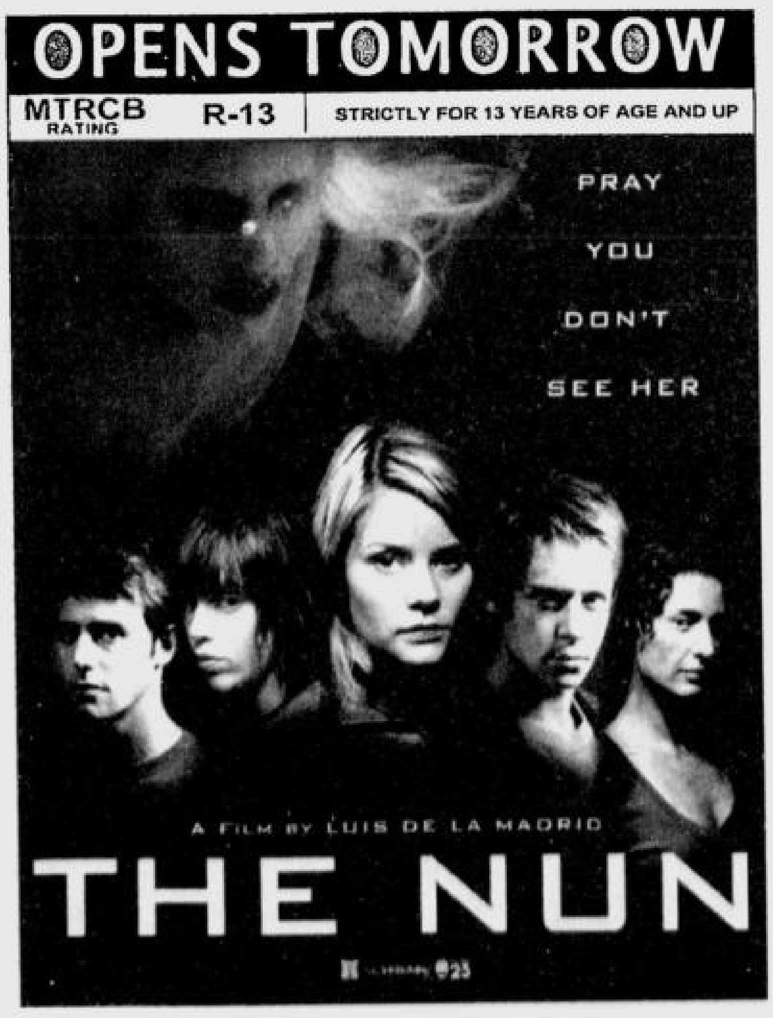
MYMP, a pop group led by guitarist Chin Alcantara and fronted by singer Juris Fernandez, is probably the hottest among the current crop of mellow music acts because its latest album had reportedly gone seven times platinum—a feat in an age of rampant CD piracy.

Still the fans couldn't get enough of the group. The Megamall show was proof.

Why would people normally attracted to artists with star quality fancy a very unassuming act like MYMP?

Fernandez's demeanor approximates that of a shy plain Jane, so it's got to be her voice—heartfelt, pleasing, charismatic.

SONGS ABOUT/ A2-2



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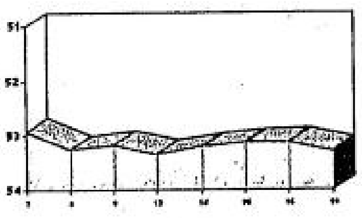

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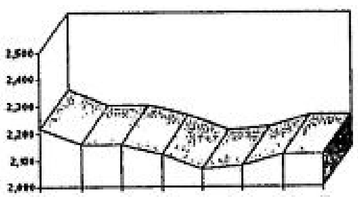


(See stock market report on Page B5)

Stocks end lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED SLIGHTLY LOWER yesterday in a session of thin volumes with the market taking its lead from Wall Street's sluggish performance on Friday, dealers said.

They said follow-through buying in se-

STOCKS/ B5

But BSP survey says only 10% try knack at investing

By Doris C. Dumlao

ONLY ONE OUT OF 10 HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED by overseas Filipino workers' remittances try to invest in stocks or private business, with four others choosing to save some money in banks and other depository institutions, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

A survey conducted by the BSP showed that about 10 percent of households based in Metro Manila have at least one OFW and of these families, 91.3 percent received remittances over the last 12 months.

In terms of how the remittances were used, 95.5 percent or nearly all of the households spent part of the money to buy food and pay for other domestic expenditures.

But BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo noted that the 39 percent of households who saved some money in banks, cooperatives and other depository institutions was a good enough number.

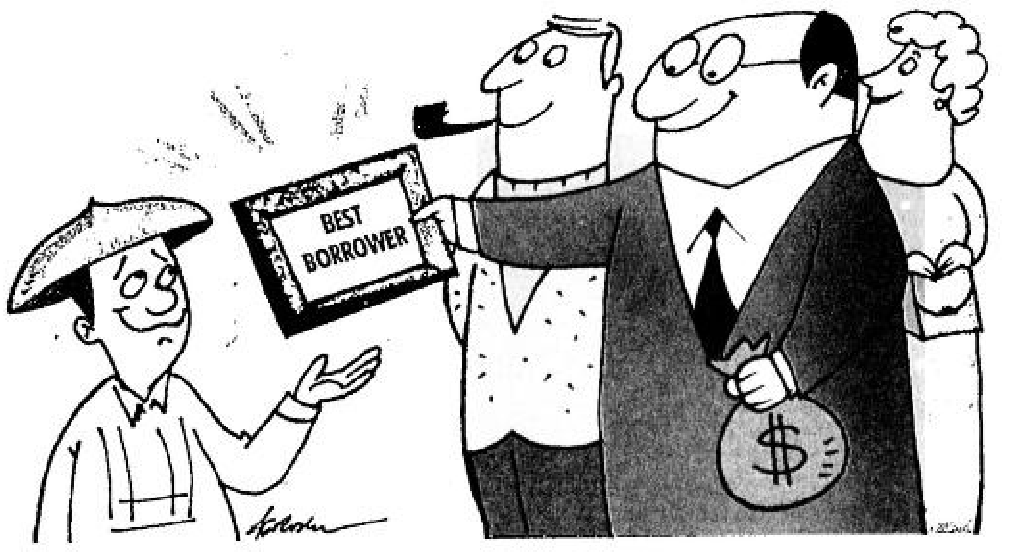
"This means that two out of five are saving money in financial institutions," he said, although noting that it was difficult to quantify the beneficial effect to the economy of funds kept in the banking system.

Guinigundo noted that next to households which spent the remittances, those who saved some money got the second highest percentage share.

The BSP survey also showed that out of all households which received OFW remittances in the last 12 months, 21.8 percent bought new home appliances, 10.9 percent spent for education, 7.7 percent bought a house, 4.1 percent acquired a motor vehicle, 2.7 percent paid for medical expenses and 1.8 percent used some money to pay house rental.

Guinigundo explained that the survey covered only the utilization behavior of household-bene-

40% OF OFW/ B2



RP bags 'best borrower' award

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT, SADDLED with close to P4 trillion in debts both to international and foreign creditors, was cited by a prestigious foreign business magazine as this year's "Best Sovereign Borrower in Asia."

Euromoney has picked the Philippines as the "best borrower" for the second year in a row.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz will receive the award for the Philippines sometime in July.

If size of borrowings would be the sole consideration in picking the winner, it would not be surprising for the Philippine to grab the award being one of the highly indebted countries in Asia.

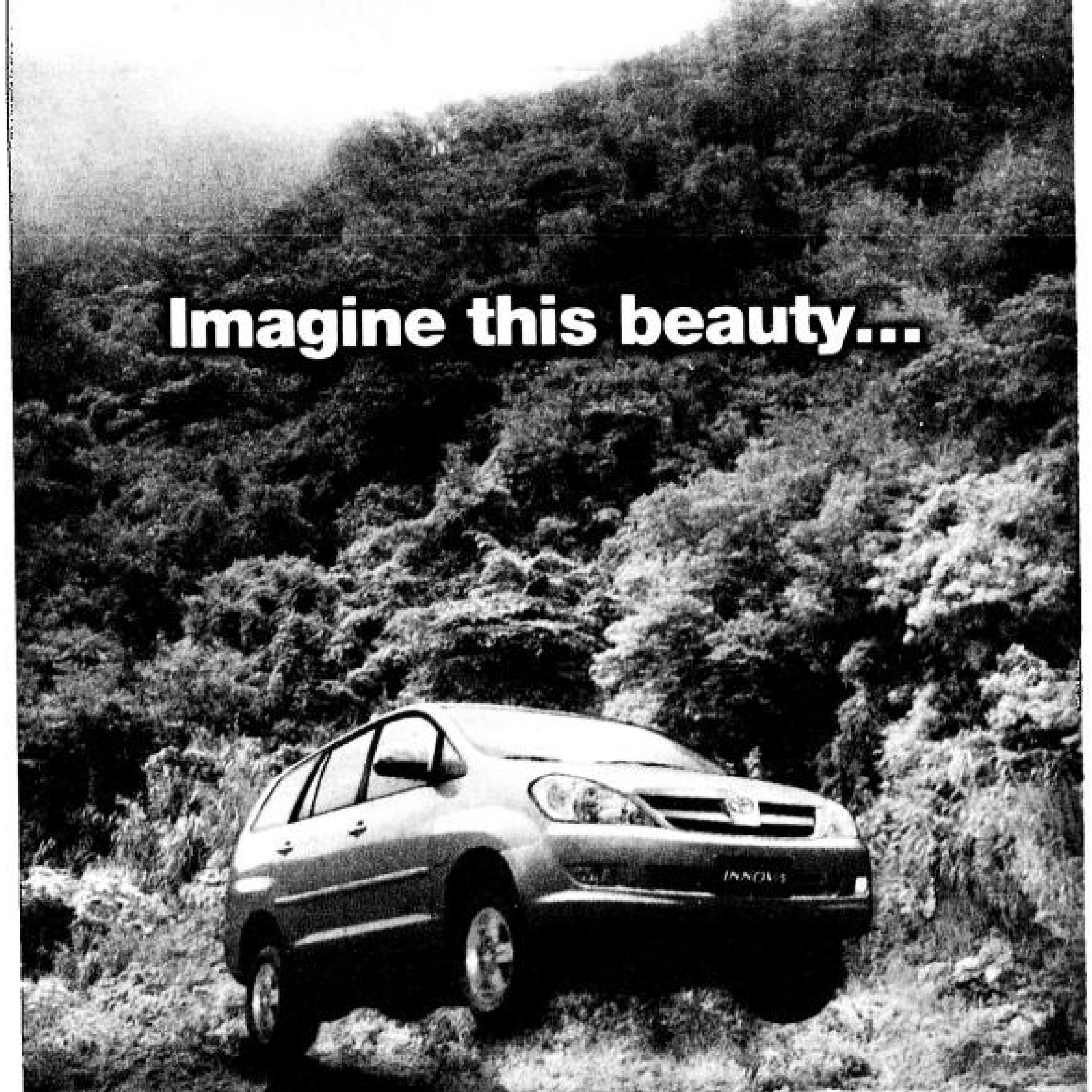
An official from the Department of Finance, which manages the country's fiscal performance, kidded that being tagged as the "best borrower" might not be something to be proud of.

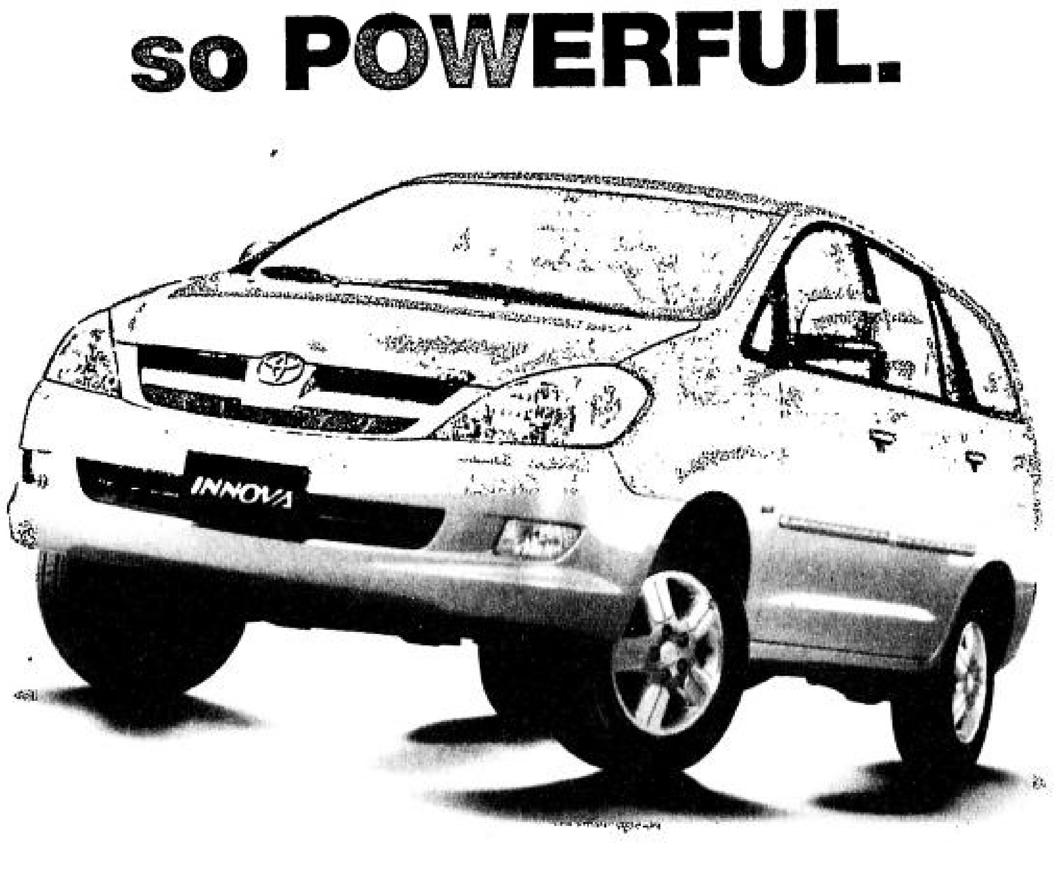
The award was given following the Philippines $2.2-billion float of dollar- and euro-denominated bonds in January, making it the first in the region to tap the international market for the year, beating its Asian counterparts in attracting the attention of investors.

Cruz explained that the award had to do more with the manner the Philippines relates with the international capital market for funding. He said it has been the policy of the

RP BAGS/ B5

GLOBAL QUALITY PROJECT





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Senate bill eyes BOI abolition

Investment promotion agency to take its place

By Michelle V. Remo

THE FISCAL INCENTIVES RATIONALIZATION bill being prepared by the Senate committee on ways and means is expected to include a provision that will abolish the Board of Investments (BOI), as the government works toward plugging huge revenue losses resulting from unnecessary tax and duty perks.

BOI provides tax- and duty-free privileges to firms that belong to industries included in the Investment Priorities Plan (IPP), which lists industries that the government supports through the granting of fiscal incentives.

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the committee, is scheduled to meet with officials of the Department of Finance today to discuss the final version of the bill. The committee intends to put the rationalization bill up for deliberations once Congress, which is currently in recess, opens next month.

According to Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran, initial talks with Recto pointed to the abolition of the BOI as the bill intends to retain fiscal incentives only to exporters.

Limiting incentives only to exporters would mean the government need not come up with the annual IPP and that the BOI's services would no longer be needed, Beltran explained.

Recto's proposed bill intends to replace the BOI with the so-called Investment Promotion Authority (IPA), which will promote the Philippines as an investment site.

Beltran said the DOF was supportive of Recto's plan to limit incentives only to exporters and to remove income tax holidays.

"Income tax holiday is a form of incentive given to firms that are already profitable, so it is not a good incentive," Beltran said.

He said incentives that were likely to be retained for exporters would include duty-free importation of equipment and raw materials, accelerated depreciation and net operating loss carryover (Nolco).

Under accelerated depreciation, firms are allowed to deduct from its income for a given year the entire cost of depreciation of its equipment, reducing in the process the income tax liabilities. Nolco, on the other hand, allows firms to deduct the amount of losses from the previous year to the current year's income to also lower their income tax obligations.

Beltran said Recto's proposed bill might also amend the 5-percent gross income tax imposed on exporters to only 1 or 3 percent.

The bill being prepared by the Senate committee on ways and means took into consideration the results of a DOF-commissioned study showing that the BOI was suffering from an 80-percent redundancy rate in terms of granting fiscal incentives.

Farm output growth seen at 5%

THE COUNTRY'S FARM OUTPUT was estimated to grow by 4.5 to 5 percent in the first semester on the back of a 7.5-percent growth in crop production, a senior official from the Department of Agriculture said.

The crops sub-sector accounts for 46 percent of the entire agriculture sector.

"Based on the advanced indicators, crop production may expand by 7 to 7.5 percent during the period. In particular, palay production is expected to post an 8.19 percent gain and corn production by 31. 5 percent," Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said, quoting a report from the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS).

The BAS report indicated that the livestock sub-sector would likely register an expansion of 2 to 2.5 percent. Poultry production, on the other hand, was expected to decline by about a percent in January to June partly due to the lower output in the first quarter.

BAS records showed that in the first quarter, palay production grew 7 percent to 3.6 million metric tons. In the second quarter, estimates point to a 9.6-percent growth to 2.9 million MT. Production is expected to expand by a faster 16 percent in the third quarter to 3.1 million MT. *Christine Gaylican*

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40% of OFW families ...

From page B1

ficiaries, as OFW themselves could invest or keep their own bank accounts.

There are about eight million OFWs or 10 percent of the population.

Overall, the Philippines' savings rate accounted for 27.8 percent of gross domestic product in 2005, still lower than Singapore's nearly 50 percent, Thailand's and Malaysia's 35 percent and Indonesia's 30 percent.

On the other hand, the Philippines' investment rate was much lower than its savings rate at only 15.7 percent.

Guinigundo said OFW-assisted households were mostly in the B and C income classes, not many of which would be immediately expected to turn into entrepreneurs or engage in stocks trading.

Based on another study earlier made by the World Bank, OFW households which were likely to start a business usually engage in transportation and communication services and manufacturing.

Those investing in transportation services mostly venture into taxi and minibus operation while popular manufacturing activities included small activities such as mat-weaving, tailoring, dressmaking and food processing.

Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
Japan International Training Cooperation Organization
Skills and Technology Transfer Project
TESDA – JITCO STTP

LIST OF ACCREDITED SENDING ORGANIZATIONS

NAME OF SENDING ORGANIZATION	PRESIDENT/CHAIRMAN	ADDRESS	TEL/FAX
1. Building Entrepreneurs Through Technology Foundation, Inc. (BEST)	MR. LEO F. MALINAY	Suite 2207 Prestige Tower, Emerald Avenue Ortigas Center, Pasig City	6379797/6334012
2. Foundation for Advancement of Skills Technology, Inc. (FAST)	MR. EDGAR E. FERNAN	- 18th Floor Unit D Magsaysay Center 1680, Roxas Blvd., Manila - Eagle Building Don Gil P. Garcia Street, Capitol Site, Cebu City	5218449 (f) 5218443 (032) 2531566, (032)2531544 (f)
3. Fil-Tech Development Foundation,Inc. (FILTECH)	MR. YURI R. YOSHIDA	2nd Floor, TAT Townhomes 5521 A. Boyle St., Brgy. Palanan, Makati City	8341391 to 93
4. Flywing Educational Advancement on Technology Foundation, Inc. (FEAT)	MR. ROLANDO C. LOCSIN	157 Road 2 cor. Tulip Street, Maloles Subd., Diliman, Quezon City	9517461/5260020 9512786
5. Forefront Technologies Foundation,Inc (FOREFRONT)	MR. MATTHEW O. TAN	Unit 309 Lady of Fatima Bldg. 1849 Pililla cor. Asuncion Valenzuela Makati City	8982124; 8958087
6. Greenlife & Forest Foundation, Inc. (Greenlife)	MS. JURI KOGA	#396 Real National Highway corner South Luzon Expressway, Calamba City Laguna	(049) 2457118/ 5453906/5453850
7. Interskills Development Foundation, Inc. (INTERSKILLS)	DR. ELVIRA A. PINEDA	869 A.P. Building, M.F. Jhocson Street, España, Sampaloc, Manila	7430652; 7320831; 7841581
8. Jinzai Kaihatsu Kyokai Foundation, Inc (JINZAI)	ATTY. ROGELIO A. AJES	Unit 914, Forros Bel-Air Tower #30 Polaris cor. Durban Sts., Makati City	8909031; 8900287
9. New Diversified Foundation, Inc.	ENGR. JOSE V. BELLO V	707 San Rafael Street, Plainview Subdivision Mandaluyong City	5359119
10. Nippon Human Resource Foundation (NIPPON)	MR. ANTONIO O. GARIN	2nd Floor, Rizal Towers # 4474 Singian Street Makati City	8093918/8093970
11. One Nikkei – Philippines Foundation, Inc. (One – Nikkei)	MS. RIZALINA L. LAMSON	6th Floor, Rizal Towers # 4474 Singian Street, 1210 Makati City	8069082
12. Phil – Japan Gijutsu Iten Foundation, Inc. (Phil – Japan)	MR. KENJI KAWASAKI	Unit 1103 Antel 2000 Corporate Centre 121 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	8945518; 8857417 (f)
13. Philippine Nikkei Jin – Kai, Inc.	MR. JUSEVEN S. AUSTERIO	Mamay Road, Lanang, Davao City	(082) 2342897; 2332548 (f)
14. Power Foundation, Inc. (POWER)	MR. ALLAN NUEGA	Unit 1, Maranon Compound, 27th Lacson Street, Brgy. Mandalagan, Bacolod City, Negros Occidental	(034) 4338040; (034) 7080749 (fax)
15. RIKOU International Development Foundation, Inc (RIKOU)	MS. LINDA C. TABARNO	242-A Pagkakaisa cor. Cebu Sts., Timog, CAA, Las Piñas City	(f) 7080493; 8251816
16. SODEYAMA Foundation	MR. STEVEN E. YAP	#159 San Jose I, Noveleta, Cavite	(046) 4382740; 09173377028
17. Skills and Technology for Entrepreneurs in the Philippines Foundation, Inc. (STEP)	MS. SUSAN SANTOS	Main - 138-142 Unit 4 Quezon Ave., Richmonde Subd., Angono, Rizal 1832 Satellite – Unit 707, 7F City State Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Oranbo, Pasig City 1600	2953284, 2953833 (f) 6373021, 6372958 (f)
18. Supreme Foundation Training Assistance, Inc. (SUPREME)	MS. LOLITA O. CHUIDIAN	47, 4F Go Tan Nards Bldg., EDSA, Bangkal, Makati City	8885105 / 4720281 4584331(f) 0920-8151411 / 8895328
19. Take Advance Technology Foundation (TATF)	MS. CHRISTINA DELA CRUZ	Rm 609 City & Land Mega Plaza, ADB Ave., cor. Garnet Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	9142911, 6876166 6875533
20. Total Opportunities Foundation, Inc. (TOP)	MS. MA. RAMONA L. JIMENEZ	Francesca Dawn Bldg., 24 Orchid Street, Capitol Site, Cebu City	(032) 2548742/2548716 (02)6370-787
21. Johnny Orola Sr. Memorial Foundation Inc. (JJO)	ATTY. JOHN OROLA DR. CARLITOS N. OROLA	Ground Floor, Knights of Rizal Bldg. A. Bonifacio Drive cor. Port Area, Manila	5270682 / 5270646 / 5270765 / 5281872
22. RACDAES Foundation	MS. RACHELLE T. ERAMIS	Rm. 404, Ma. Christina Bldg., Osmena Blvd., Cebu City	(032) 2814488; 2562401(f)
23. Japan Access for Filipinos Expertise Enhancement Foundation, Inc. (JAFEE)	ENGR. ALFREDO DIZON	P & L Bldg. II South Superhighway cor. Arellano St., Palanan, Makati City	8329580, 8329581(f)
24. Philippine Assist – Life Foundation, Inc. (Phil-Assist)	MR. SOICHIRO SEKIGUCHI	Rm 202 Doña Generosa Bldg., 282 EDSA Extension, Pasay City	8917879, 8547737
25. Oriental Maine Foundation, Inc.	CAPT. ROSENDO C. HERRERA	Rocrae Bldg., Vitalez Compd., Sucat Road, Parañaque City	8257965 to 69; 8255289(f)
26. Marianne Foundation, Inc.	MS. ANNA LIZA MANUEL	#40 Ortigas Avenue Extension, Pasig City, Philippines	6551264/09194701060
27 COMPLEAT Skills, Inc	MR. PABLO T. SUGAY	Rm 203, Heartland Bldg., 1144 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City 1200	8903860, 8951675(f)
28 Skills and Technical Information Exchange Foundation, Inc. (STIEFI)	MS. MEDAFIL Y. OUANO	Rm 203 C & F Ramirez Bldg. I, SR Cabahug Street, Ibabao Mandaue City, Cebu, Phils.	(032) 344 0158
		Del Mundo Mansion Calamba cor Kundiman St., Sampaloc, Metro Manila	Telefax: (02) 7404726
29 Japlacum Training Assistance Foundation, Inc.	MS. MA. RUBY D. ENRIQUEZ	Room 402 Mayson Bldg., 2836 Taft Avenue, Pasay City, Philippines	Telefax. 8311127
30. MAVENTCH Foundation, Inc.	MR. RICHARDSON D. GENTEROY	Unit 5 & 6, 2/F NJH Business Complex Bldg. Pres. J.P. Laurel Highway, Poblacion 4, Tanauan City Batangas Province 4232	(043) 7785980/7785987 maventdn@yahoo.com
31 Asia Resources Keepers Training Foundation, Inc	MR. EDGAR M. ACABA	2nd floor FETA Bldg. 1823 J. Bocobo Street, Malate, Manila	(632) 526 5510/ark_af2004 4501723 presidu@yahoo.com
32. Fil-Nippon Link Federation and Exchange Foundation, Inc.	MR. NOEL C. SOBREMISANA	Rm. 703, 7th Flr. No. 21 Parc House Condominium, Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City	8957145/fax # 895 7146
33. Gloucester Foundation, Inc.	MS. LILIA G. ICHIKAWA	2/f De Ocampo Bldg., T.M. Kalaw St., Lipa City Rm. 712 Don Santiago Building, 1344 Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila	043-3120306/3120316 5231050
34. ES Youth Training Foundation, Inc.	MS. ELENA TAKAHASHI	0115 Junquera Extension, Cogon, Cebu City	032- 2558023/2535102/ 032-2535342
35. ARISE Foundation, Inc.	MR. RAMON GABUYA	Manhattan 101/114, Madison Manor Complex, Brgy. Almanza Uno, Manila Doctors Village, Las Piñas City,	8004052
36. GAVEST Foundation, Inc.	MR. GABRIEL CALLING	Don Inocencio Subdivision, Brgy. Bantug Norte, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija	044- 4640124/ 044-4640120
37. Philippine Konshusei Zaidan, Inc.	MR. MASAHIRO OKUDA	B106 Lopez Building No. 73 Session Road, 2600 Baguio City	074-4421327
38. Nihonfil Mission Foundation, Inc.	MS. ADELAIDA ACOSTA	Rm. 202 Purificacion Bldg. I-H-3 Aguinaldo Highway, Palico II Imus Cavite	046-4715001
39 God's Door Education And Livelihood Foundation, Inc	MS. JESSICA FABRIGAS	2740 Paraday Street, San Isidro, Makati City	7290165 T/F
40 Economic and Social Cooperation for Local Development Foundation, Inc.	ATTY. NILO GEONZON	Unit 206 FCC Building 119 Rada Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City	7502146/4752146T/F

More Filipinos deployed to Japan under TESDA-JITCO training program

By DANILO P. CRUZ

THE PHILIPPINES IS ONE OF 15 FOREIGN COUNTRIES which sent "blue-collar" workers to pursue further training in Japan in 2004-05.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) said the total number of Filipino trainees sent to Japan under the TESDA-Japan International Training Cooperation Organization (JITCO) skills technology transfer project (STTP) during the 2-year period reached 2,764, of which 70 percent are males and 30 percent females.

China with 41,038 trainees as of December 2004 led the sending list, followed by Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Myanmar, India, Laos, Nepal, Peru, Uzbekistan, and others.

JITCO had supported 51,012 trainees from said 15 countries as of December 2005, with the Philippines occupying the fourth slot with 1,557 trainees, of which 75 percent or 1,089 are males and 25 percent or 468 females.

Deployment during the first five months of this year meanwhile reached 724, an increase of 593 percent or 602 trainees against the year-long total of only 122 in 1996, or 10 years ago. (please see graph #1).

The welding technicians group not only prevented the country from suffering a shortfall in the number of trainees sent under STTP in 2005 but also enabled a hefty increase over the 2004 figures.

This bit of drama in the STTP is reported by TESDA-JITCO Deputy Project Director Agripina P. Zafra as she announced that three sending organizations – the Foundation for Advancement of Skills Technology Inc. (FAST), Greenlife & Forest Foundation and Interskills Development Foundation – dominated the "lead list" during the year with a total deployment of 894 trainees (please see Graph # 2).

Deployment increase managed by the 42 TESDA-accredited sending organizations was credited by Zafra to their growing collaboration with Japan's accepting organizations and companies.

Collective deployment from 1995 to May this year reached 6,807 trainees, with Greenlife & Forest Foundation and FAST Inc. again being the top two senders with 2,857 followed by Interskills Development Foundation (965), Nippon Human Resource Foundation (807) and Jinzai Kaihatsu Kyokai (357).

The Japan International Training Cooperation Organization is an umbrella organization established in 1991 which provides comprehensive support and services to member companies and organizations, mainly from the private sector, that accept foreign trainees through the Industrial Training Program (ITP) and the Technical Internship Program (TIP) in Japan.

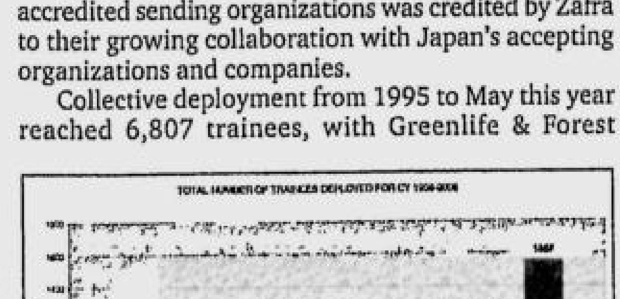
The purpose of ITP and TIP are: 1.) Industrial human resource development, 2.) Facilitate the transfer of skills through industrial training and internship, and 3.) Reintegration into the industry of the sending country.

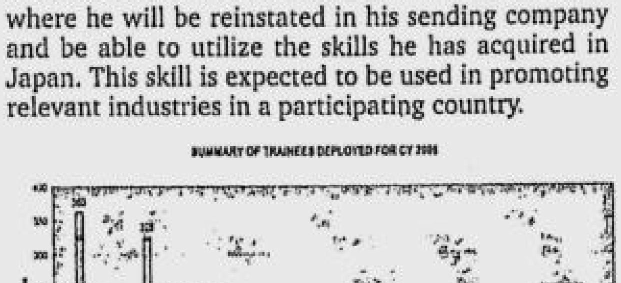
There is consultation and exchange of information between JITCO and the country sending a trainee to Japan as a counter-part authority. Towards this end, JITCO and the sending country, say, the Philippines as represented by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority have to find an accredited sending organization.

From the sending organization, a sending company where the trainee has acquired the necessary skill issues a certification attesting to the qualification of the trainee concerned to be dispatched to an accepting organization in Japan.

At the last training ground, the trainee is received by an accepting company where he graduates as a technical intern, thus completing a full three-year training course in his chosen field of specialization. As a trainee he or she is given only a living allowance and protection under the Immigration Control Laws and Regulations of Japan.

After completion of the program, a trainee or technical intern should return to his home country where he will be reinstated in his sending company and be able to utilize the skills he has acquired in Japan. This skill is expected to be used in promoting relevant industries in a participating country.





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Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o Noel A. Nicolasora) starting **June 20, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Five Hundred (P500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **July 12, 2006, 10:00 a.m.** at 1st Floor Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on July 26, 2006** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC - EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--June 20, 2006)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1201 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 893-6001 / 1320

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC – Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

PURCHASE OF 5,000 CU.M. SAND & GRAVEL, BASE COURSE GH 613884

The Approved Budget is **P3,000,000.00** chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC NNGP Logistics Section (c/o Mila B. Arana) starting **June 21, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Three Hundred **(P300.00).**

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **June 28, 2006, 2:00 PM** at the Conference Room, PNOC-EDC NNGP, Brgy. Mailum, Bago City, Negros Occidental.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Logistics Section, Mailum Base Camp, Barangay Mailum, Bago City not later than **2:00 PM of July 13, 2006** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 20 & 27, 2006)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Companies Bldg., Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1201 Makati City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 893-6001 / 1320

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

PURCHASE OF 5,000 CU.M. BASE COURSE, AGGREGATE, ITEM # 201 GH 613885

The Approved Budget is **P3,250,000.00** chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund.

Application forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC NNGP Logistics Section (c/o Mila B. Arana) starting **June 21, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Three Hundred **(P300.00).**

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **June 28, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the Conference Room, PNOC-EDC NNGP, Brgy. Mailum, Bago City, Negros Occidental.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Logistics Section, Mailum Base Camp, Barangay Mailum, Bago City not later than **2:00 p.m. of July 13, 2006** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–June 20 & 27, 2006)

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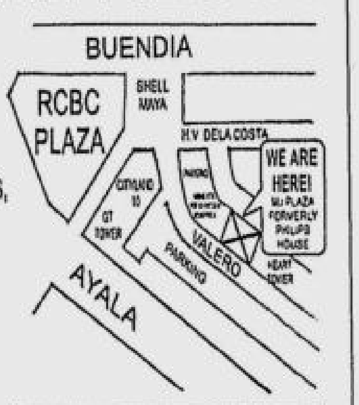

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SULTAN KUDARAT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat

INVITATION FOR BIDS

(Ref.: IFB No. 2006-01)

The Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SUKELCO) has made available from the National Electrification Administration (NEA) subsidy fund the amount of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP 1,500,000.00) which is the Approved Budget Cost (ABC) toward the cost of constructing below-named distribution line section. Bids higher than the ABC shall automatically be rejected.

The Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc. now invites Sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the line construction which includes Materials and Labor (including ROW Clearing) for:

Barangay Sinapulan, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information and inspect the Bidding Documents at the office of the Engineering Manager, Engr. Godofredo F. Sanchez, Jr.

Bidding Documents may be purchased, starting June 21, 2006 by an interested eligible Bidder upon submission of a written application to the BAC Chairman and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Philippine Peso (PhP 10,000.00).

Sealed envelopes containing the technical and financial proposals in separate envelopes duly marked as such will be received by the BAC at the Board Room on or before 10:00 a.m., July 13, 2006 at which time and place the technical proposals will be opened and evaluated. The financial proposals of bidders found eligible to bid will then be opened and read in the presence of Bidders or Bidder's representatives who choose to attend, otherwise, they will be returned unopened to ineligible bidders.

A pre-bid conference will be held on June 30, 2006 at 10:00 a.m., at the Board Room.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a bid security, in cash or cashier's check, in the amount equivalent to 2-1/2% of the amount of bid. This bid security shall be valid for at least 150 days, starting from the date of bid opening.

The Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc. hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids without disclosing any reason, to waive any minor defects or infirmities therein and to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the Cooperative.

(Sgd.) **DEMETRIO O. JEREZ**
General Manager

(PDI – June 20 & 27, 2006)

6th PMAP Ford Executive Golf Tourney

The Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP), through its Fellowship and Sports Committee, invites all golf enthusiasts to swing, putt, and show their best form in the greens on the forthcoming 6th PMAP – Ford Executive Golf Tournament on June 21, Wednesday, at the Valley Golf and Country Club. Tee off time is at 6:00 to 7:00 am on a System 36 format.

Tickets are already available at P1,800, inclusive of green fee, caddie fee, lunch and raffle ticket. For reservations and inquiries, please call the PMAP Professional Staff at Tel. 726-1581/88/32 or email pmap@pmap.org.ph.

ILOCOS NORTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Suyo, Dingras, Ilocos Norte, PHILIPPINES 2913
Tel. Nos. (077) 784-75-46 & 47; 784-71-26
Fax. No. (077) 784-71-25

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND FOR BIDS

The Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (INEC) invites qualified bidders for the long term supply of the INEC's power requirements commencing in the year 2010.

Interested parties shall submit their company profile, duly notarized authorized representative and primary contact person to:

THE GENERAL MANAGER
Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Suyo, Dingras, Ilocos Norte

Starting on June 26, 2006 until July 21, 2006.

Only those qualified by the PBAC shall be invited to BID.

(Sgd.) **ROMILLAS C. PASCUAL**
General Manager

(PDI June 19, 20 & 21, 2006)

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OBITUARIES

NATIVIDAD SISON NOCHE

(Naty's Embroideries)

Peacefully joined her Creator
on June 18, 2006 at the age of 89.

Her bereaved children, **CHITO** and **Atty. MARIA CONCEPCION (GIRLIE)**, request for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Taal, Batangas. Interment will be on Saturday, June 24, 2006 after the 3:00 pm Mass at Taal Basilica.

In Loving Memory
On the 21st Death Anniversary of

Tan Go Su

On June 20, 2006

The Holy sacrifice of the Mass will be offered today at the following churches

Immaculate Conception Parish
Basilica Minore, *Malolos City* .... 6:00 a.m.
Barasoain Church, *Malolos City* .... 6:00 a.m.
Saint Jude Catholic Church, *Manila* .... 6:00 a.m.
Saint Joseph Church, *Manila* .... 6:00 a.m.
Mary the Queen, *San Juan, Manila* .... 6:00 a.m.

We the family, who remember him so dearly request relatives, friends & the pious readers to join us in our prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

The Most Rev. Ramón C. Argüelles, D.D., Archbishop of Lipa,
The Most Rev. Salvador Q. Quizon, D.D., Former Aux. Bishop of Lipa,
The Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful of the Archdiocese of Lipa

Together with the Leyesa-de Villa Family

announce with joy and hope the triumphant crossing over from us to the everlasting love of the Father of our dear

Rt. Rev. Msgr. NICANOR LEYESA DE VILLA

on 18 June 2006, Solemnity of the Corpus Christi at the age of 92.

Ordained Priest: *28 May 1939*
Promoted to the Dignity of Domestic Prelate: *9 April 1967*

Msgr. De Villa's Assignments:

Parish Priest	*1939-1942*	*Lobo, Batangas*
	1942-1955	*Tangob, Lipa City*
	1955-1971	*Balayan, Batangas*
	1971-1979	*Calaca, Batangas*
	1979-1980	*Bauan, Batangas*
	1980-1989	*San Sebastian Cathedral*
Vice-Rector / Professor	*1950-1951*	*St. Francis de Sales Major Seminary*
Vice-Chancellor	*1951*	
Chancellor	*1951-1955*	
Vicar Forane	*1950-1955*	
Episcopal Vicar	*District of Balayan*	
Member	*Archdiocesan College of Consultors*	
Vicar General	*1980-1989*	*Archdiocese of Lipa*
Defender of the Bond		
Censor of Books		

His mortal remains lie in state at the De Villa Family Residence in Brgy. Tangob, Lipa City and will be transferred to San Sebastian Cathedral, Lipa City on Thursday, 22 June 2006 at 9:00 a.m. where the Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated at 2:00 p.m. Interment follows immediately.

Please omit flowers. Donations to the St. Joseph Seniorate, Home for the Aged and Infirmed Priests of the Archdiocese of Lipa, will be deeply appreciated.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Matthew 10:39

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	[illegible]	
		DATE & TIME	PLACE
CORAZON P. ABALOS	Superior Chapel	June 24, 2006 9:00 a.m.	Eternal Gardens Memorial Park Caloocan City
EGIDEO A. OSDON	Chapel B, Quezon City	June 20, 2006 2:00 p.m.	Gethsemane Antipolo City

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 19, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	34	34	34	34	100,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	47	47	46.5	46.5	955,200
China Banking Corp.	870	870	870	870	660
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	1,040,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	74	74	73	73.5	155,900
International Exch. Bank	41	41	41	41	5,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32.5	32.5	32	32.5	922,600
Philippine National Bank	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	3,300
Security Bank Corp.	45	45	45	45	12,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	42	42	42	42	400
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
First Abacus Financial	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	30,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	215	215	215	215	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2020	2020	2020	2020	950
Ivantage Corp.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	550,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	42.5	42.5	42	42	386,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43.5	43.5	43.5	43.5	144,000
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	31,000
Manila Electric Co. B	21	21.25	20.75	21.25	321,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7	7.1	7	7.1	441,000
Petron Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.6	2,341,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	130,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	1,000,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	22.75	23	55,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	32	32	31.5	32	424,100
Pancake House Inc.	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.7	2,795,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63.5	64.5	63.5	64.5	96,700
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70	68.5	70	527,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19.25	19	19.25	393,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	150,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.2	1,870,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.45	1,288,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	90,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.07	0.07	2,200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	3,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	355	355	345	347.5	92,510
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.3	160,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	1,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.94	1.94	1.92	1.92	533,000
APC Group Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	50,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.94	380,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.02	0.99	0.99	7,930,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.7	298,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.9	886,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6	6	5.9	6	1,270,000
Keppel Holdings	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	150,000
SM Investments Corp.	212	212	211	212	26,630
South China Resources Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.72	0.72	130,000
UniOil Res. & Holdings Co	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	100,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.09	0.09	1,600,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.25	11.75	12,831,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Belle Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	1,004,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.9	1.96	1.9	1.96	138,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	50,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	1,480,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	2,451,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	520,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	20,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	1,600,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	3,333,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	990,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Primex Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	60,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10	262,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	115,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.4	9,466,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.16	1,165,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	930	930	930	930	28,630
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.25	3.3	3.2	3.3	270,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1800	1810	1795	1800	82,190
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	590,000
Ionics Inc.	2.28	2.5	2.28	2.44	2,905,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.26	1.34	1.2	1.2	286,000
Philweb Corp.	0.029	0.03	0.028	0.029	295,000,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	300,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	818,700
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	40,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	660,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
EDUCATION					
IPeople Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.05	36,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.06	2.16	2.06	2.12	331,000
Paxys Inc.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	106,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.0075	0.007	0.007	64,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.3	6.4	6.1	6.3	1,409,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	2,300,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	1,150,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.021	38,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	800,000
Omico Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	276,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	3.45	3.55	3.45	3.5	10,697,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	3.45	3.55	3.4	3.5	16,727,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	79,200
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	450,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	20,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	50,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	30,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	157,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.5	17	16.5	17	573,200
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series G	10.5	10.5	10	10	3,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series I	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	2,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.5	10,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	252,500

CURRENCIES

June 19, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.790764	1.000000	53.0550
Japan	Yen	0.006869	0.008686	0.4608
United Kingdom	Pound	1.463388	1.850600	98.1836
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.101861	0.128813	6.8342
Switzerland	Franc	0.642845	0.812942	43.1306
Canada	Dollar	0.704467	0.890869	47.2651
Singapore	Dollar	0.496056	0.627313	33.2821
Australia	Dollar	0.584150	0.738716	39.1926
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.097572	2.652590	140.7332
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210848	0.266638	14.1465
Brunei	Dollar	0.494506	0.625352	33.1781
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000108	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020574	0.026018	1.3804
UAE	Dirham	0.215291	0.272257	14.4446
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.264600	67.0934
Argentina	Peso	0.256992	0.324992	17.2425
Brazil	Real	0.351294	0.444247	23.5695
Denmark	Kroner	0.134169	0.169670	9.0018
India	Rupee	0.017307	0.021887	1.1612
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217243	0.274725	14.5755
Mexico	New Peso	0.069153	0.087451	4.6397
New Zealand	Dollar	0.487734	0.616789	32.7237
Norway	Kroner	0.127481	0.161212	8.5531
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013131	0.016606	0.8810
South Africa	Rand	0.115021	0.145455	7.7171
Korea	Won	0.000828	0.001047	0.0555
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024359	0.030805	1.6344

Stocks end lower

From page B1

lected stocks after a two-day rally last week limited the market's downside.

The composite index ended down 1.68 points to 2,119.79 after trading between 2,107.09 and 2,122.62. Volume stood at 830.88 million shares worth P845.72 million.

The broader all-shares index retreated 0.58 points to 1,342.68.

Gains outpaced losers 34 to 29, with 51 stocks unchanged.

"There's simply no inspiring news to trade on. The market is now consolidating after last week's sharp swings," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

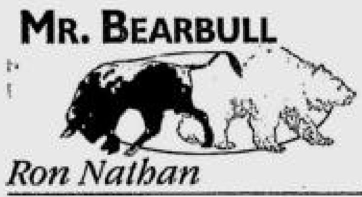
The main index fell to a four-month low last Wednesday, tracking sharp losses on Wall Street and in other global markets, before partially recovering on Thursday and Friday.

Dealers said investors continue to worry about further increases in US interest rates, which could slow economic growth in the world's biggest economy. However, recent sharp falls in the equities market have provided an opportunity to buy fundamentally-sound stocks at much cheaper prices.

Jonathan Ravelas of Banco de Oro said the market is now at "a near-term bottom" and could soon rebound. *AFP*

Surviving a global meltdown

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

WHEN I STARTED WRITING IN the INQUIRER 3 years ago. I used to include limericks and quatrains, which are poems of 5 or 4 lines, in which the first two lines rhymed, then the next two, and the last line rhymed with the first. Some were rather naughty but they all got published. See if you like them:

Jack and Jill went up to hill,
To get a pail of water,
Silly Jill forgot her pill,
And now they have a daughter.
Jack and Jill went up the hill,
Each one had a quarter.
Jill came down with 50 cents,
You think they went for water?
Mary had a little lamb,
Her father shot it dead.
Now it goes to school with her,
Between two bits of bread.
There was a young man from
BEL-AIR,
Making love to his girl on the
stair.
The bannister broke so he doubled his stroke,
And finished her off in mid air.

* * *

It has been a roller coaster week. In the first half, the DOW opened higher but closed much lower so the whole Asian region, including the PSEi followed suit. The risk factor fell to 1 so I predicted a technical rally as soon as the DOW closed higher but the Consumer Price Index rose 0.3 percent, higher than expected, and the DOW continued to fall. Then the Consumer Price Index also rose 0.3 percent so members of the Federal Reserve concentrated on talking about the need to contain inflation, which meant further rate hikes.

It was not until Thursday, when the DOW had fallen through 11,000 and commodities had suffered a traumatic slide that the 6-week bloodbath came to an end. US investors decided at last that the market had already discounted an interest-rate hike on June 29, increasing inflation and a slowing economy so the DOW rallied 100 points and all markets throughout Asia and Europe recovered strongly.

However, I warned that foreign brokers would sell into the rally and that is exactly what happened. The PSEi opened with a gain of 28 points but after net selling of P224 million, the index closed only 14 points higher. The next day, the DOW jumped nearby 200 points so the PSEi opened 71 points higher but foreign selling on a lesser scale pared the gain to 39 points.

On Friday night, the DOW closed unchanged and the PSEi moved sideways. I expect foreign selling to continue, as the perception of emerging-market risk is not going to disappear overnight. In fact, I think that the move to bring foreign funds home to the US will continue. Over the past 3 weeks, no less than $8.4 billion of stocks have been sold and the funds repatriated. This covers the whole of Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

As this occurred, the dollar strengthened against most currencies and the peso rose above 53, forcing petrol prices higher and higher. Commodities took a terrible beating and gold, which is different from the rest because it is not an industrial metal, dropped from $730 an ounce to $542. Together with other metals, it has recovered to $571 and PHILEX, which had halved from P5.90 to P2.75, bounced back to P3.50. I expect PHILEX to announce good results for the second quarter. The annual general meeting is on June 23.

The reason for the sudden turnaround in sentiment was a statement from Fed Chair Bernanke that the US economy could withstand rising energy costs, a statement also made by Alan Greenspan, a week earlier in a testimony before the Senate committee on energy. Bernanke said that higher energy costs were manageable over the long term even through they might slow growth and boost prices in the short term. Both men have expressed confidence that the economy is flexible and resilient.

Asian currencies and shares rebounded as concern over an extended flight from emerging markets eased. The NIKKEI rose 408 points on Friday, the HANG SENG 374 points, the SENSEX 497 points, KARACHI 310 points and TAIWAN 141 points. Metal prices also showed a strong recovery. I believe the Fed will raise rates 0.25 percent this month and again in July or August. After that, the Fed might pause to study the data.

The US economy slowed by 0.1 percent in May but a single month's figures mean little. In the first quarter, GDP rose by an exceptional 5.3 percent, up from 1.6 percent in the previous quarter. The Fed will be quite happy if the economy will grow at 3 percent to 3.5 percent this year and inflation slows to around 2 percent. Achieving this will be difficult as too many rate hikes could cause a slump in the housing market, which would spread to the equity market.

I agree with Daiwa Securities that once the Fed stops hiking rates, there will be downward pressure on the dollar. The US would not be averse to this, as it would help reduce its current-account deficit. The economy has to cope with a budget deficit, a huge current-account deficit and expenditure of $318 billion on the war in Iraq.

After initial denials, the Philippine government has confirmed that it will be going to the global market by September to sell another $1 billion of dollar- and euro-bonds. It is fortunate that they have already raised $2 billion earlier in the year when rates were favorable because the next sale is going to be difficult. Appetite for emerging-market risk has largely disappeared so higher yields will be necessary this time around.

The Treasury will reject bids at its weekly auction for as long as possible but eventually the yield on the benchmark 91-day bill will rise from 5 percent to 8.5 percent. This has serious implications for mortgage loans and it will also deter companies from borrowing. Already, BPI has said that lack of large corporate borrowers has caused lending growth to be cut from 10 percent to 4 percent this year.

The 1-year bill will probably yield 9.5 percent and the 5-year bond 11 percent. These high yields will slow down the economy. The government is cutting back on spending to balance the deficit but this is not the answer. Fitch Rating is unimpressed with the government's performance so far and will not change its view on its ratings.

We have passed through a period of exceptionally high volatility. From now on, markets, commodities and currencies will continue to fluctuate but with less volatility. I believe the worst is over for now but I do not rule out another round of selling of emerging-market stocks, especially if Bernanke manages to get it just right. Holding a certain percentage in cash, as we wait to hear what Bernanke has to say after the next rate hike, is not a bad idea. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

Nokia, Siemens to merge phone network equipment units

HELSINKI/FRANKFURT—NOKIA AND Siemens AG have agreed to combine their telecom equipment units in a deal creating one of the biggest players in the industry, the companies said yesterday.

They said the businesses to be combined in the 50-50 joint venture called Nokia Siemens Networks had sales of 15.8 billion euros ($20 billion) last year.

German industrial conglomerate Siemens declined to comment on the financial details of the deal, which the Wall Street Journal has reported is worth $31.6 billion.

The deal will put the new company in the same league as current industry leader Cisco Systems Inc. and the new merged Alcatel-Lucent in terms of sales, and offer savings as they take on fierce competition.

The two companies said they expected cost synergies of 1.5 billion euros yearly by 2010 from the combination of Nokia's networks division and the Siemens carrier business in fixed and mobile networks.

"We believe the partnership with Siemens is the most effective way to build the scale and broad product portfolio necessary to compete globally," Nokia chief executive Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo said in a statement.

Nokia Siemens Networks will have its headquarters in Nokia's home country of Finland and be headed by Simon Beresford-Wylie, currently in charge of Nokia's networks division. It will also have a regional headquarters in Siemens' home city of Munich.

The tie-up of Alcatel and Lucent announced in April sparked talk of more possible mergers and partnerships between infrastructure gear makers, who have come under increasing pressure from Asian rivals like Huawei.

"The merger gives Nokia and Siemens scale they couldn't get otherwise. You're going to be able to get rid of a lot of people, basically. They share common markets," said analyst Ed Snyder of Charter Equity Research.

Nokia and Siemens said they expected to cut 10 to 15 percent of the combined businesses' 60,000 staff over the next four years.

Analyst Snyder added, however: "I think it makes a lot of sense from the cost side of the equation, but I don't think its going to help their growth profile at all."

Analysts and media have linked Nokia to the Siemens communications business or parts of it for months.

Germany's Manager Magazine reported in February that Siemens had been in talks to sell its telecoms equipment unit Com to Nokia or to form a joint venture, but talks failed as Nokia was only interested in Siemens' profitable mobile networks equipment arm and not the loss-making fixed-line networks business.

Nokia has shied away from major deals in the past despite its sizeable cash reserves, which stood at 9 billion euros at the end of March.

Nokia's management has said repeatedly it aims to make more acquisitions in the future and it plans to be a buyer in the consolidation of the infrastructure sector. *Reuters*

₱2B set aside for Sta. Lucia project

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

DEVELOPER STA. LUCIA REALTY & DEvelopment Inc. said it was earmarking P2 billion for the development of about 400 hectares of land in Cavite into a residential community, SLRDI president Exequiel D. Robles said following yesterday's stockholders' meeting of Philippine Racing Club Inc.

Robles said the project, dubbed "Saddle and Club," would be near the future site of PRCI's racetrack in Cavite. Proponents are considering either the pre-selling of the lots or tapping bank loans to raise funds for the project.

SLRDI is developing some 400 hectares of a 500-hectare property in Cavite that belongs to a number of landowners including PRCI.

PRCI is seriously considering moving its 20- hectare race track in Sta. Ana Park in Makati City to a 70-hectare site in Cavite. In 1999, PRCI entered into a joint venture with SLRDI for the development of a significant portion of its property in Cavite into residential and commercial lots. Also, SLRDI will develop a practice track for racehorses and horse stable lots for sale and for lease to horse owners, PRCI said in a financial report.

Pagcor hit for Subic casino closure

A MALAYSIAN INVESTOR YESTERDAY criticized the Philippine government for allegedly failing to honor business contracts.

In a statement, Khoo Boo Boon, executive director and CEO of Legend International Resorts Ltd. (LIRL), said the recent closure of Legenda Hotel Casino in the Subic Freeport Zone by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) would likely affect the flow of investments into the country.

The company is currently under rehabilitation, which was approved by an Olongapo court in November 2004.

Legenda Casino was closed last May by Pagcor allegedly due to LIRL's failure to remit the former's 15-percent share in the casino's revenue as contained in its license to operate. LIRL, however, claimed it had been losing money since 1999 because of the Asian financial crisis.

In 2000, despite negotiations to address the issue, Pagcor and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Administration (SBMA) threatened to cancel LIRL's license and shut down the casino's operations unless it would agree to certain amendments to its agreement with the government.

In the same statement, Khoo said his company eventually agreed to the amendment. But after attempts to hammer out an amicable settlement with Pagcor failed, LIRL filed for an injunction against the state gaming firm.

RP bags 'best borrower' award

From page B1

Bureau of the Treasury, which does the borrowings in behalf of the Philippine government, to be transparent to the market.

Transparency, in terms of how much borrowings the government will make in a year, pleases investors because it helps them plot their investment schedule, he said. Through constant communication with foreign investors, such as through the conduct of road shows, the country was able to develop a good business relationship with them, Cruz added.

Aside from transparency, the government's policy shift from issuing several but small sizes of borrowings to few yet big volumes of bond floats was also credited by Euromoney.

"The (government) tapped the market just three times in the past 12 months from five global bond issues, a sharp reduction on previous years. The new strategy that started the previous year marks a policy shift away from tendency to tap existing issues that often upset incumbent investors," Euromoney said in its June article.

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BUSINESS

National gov't debt hit ₱3.96T in March

Drop due to lower borrowing needs, stronger peso

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S outstanding debt stood at P3.962 trillion as of end-March, falling slightly from the previous month's level due to shrinking borrowing requirements and the peso's appreciation.

Data from the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) showed that the latest debt figure was 0.04 percent lower than the P3.964 trillion recorded in end-February. It was also equivalent to 71 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), slightly better than the 72 percent recorded in the previous month.

This is in line with the government's aim to bring the debt down to 56 percent of GDP by 2008, when it achieves a balanced budget, National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a statement.

BTr figures showed that of the total debt, foreign obligations accounted for P1.772 trillion while domestic liabilities had the bigger share of P2.190 trillion.

Foreign borrowings are incurred through sovereign bonds flotation and official development assistance (ODA) borrowings. Domestic debts are incurred through the issuance of Treasury bills and bonds.

The decline in the debt figure was aided by the strengthening of the peso, which averaged at 51.725 to $1 in February abd at 51.158 to $1 in March.

The P1.772-trillion foreign debt as of March represented a 1.4-percent drop from the P1.796 trillion the previous month.

However, the P2.19 trillion in domestic obligations marked a 1-percent rise from the P2.168 trillion in February.

The government has set a medium-term target of reducing its debt-to-GDP ratio to only 56 percent by 2008 to help improve the country's credit standing. Currently, the Philippines' credit ratings are far below investment grade, which credit-rating agencies blame on the country's huge debt level.

Fiscal authorities said the Philippines would be able to hit the target, given its declining budget deficit that allows the government to reduce its borrowings. The deficit stood at P146.8 billion last year and is expected to drop to only P125 billion this year. The budget gap is expected to go down to P63 billion next year and to zero by 2008.

US call center expansion creates 2,800 jobs

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE PLAN OF A UNITED States-based company to expand its call center operations in the country may create as many as 2,800 new jobs for Filipinos fluent in English.

Ernesto Herrera, secretary general of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, yesterday said the Deerfield, Illinois-based APAC Customer Services Inc. is expected to open its third call center in Manila in the last quarter of the year.

Citing information gathered from APAC's regulatory filing in the US, Herrera said that the Manila expansion comes as the company is current downsizing its US-based call center operations, transferring the bulk of it to Manila.

APAC's new call center is expected to have 2,000 seats and employ about 2,800 people, he said.

Herrera in a statement said that the new office would be a boon for the country's fresh college graduates.

APAC already has two call centers in Metro Manila, both located in Alabang.

According to a TUCP statement, most of APAC's clients based in the US are involved in health care, financial services, travel, entertainment and publishing industries.

It also said APAC shares are publicly traded in the Nasdaq stock market in New York.

In 2005, the company earned $239.8 million.

Herrera estimated that APAC would shell out around $15 million, or around P795 million, for the new facility.

He said another call center firm spent the same amount in putting up around 2,000 additional call center seats in the Philippines.

Call center operations providing service to offshore clients have been flourishing in the country, where English is widely spoken.

The Philippine government has been campaigning on behalf of the call center industry in an effort to provide more jobs to Filipinos, with President Macapagal-Arroyo giving orders to set up a call center school.

THERE are new call center jobs just waiting for fresh college graduates in the workforce.

Biscuit maker expanding

REPUBLIC BISCUIT CORP. (Rebisco) HAS expanded its biscuit-making business to Cagayan de Oro, Rebisco director Jacinto Ng Jr. said.

Ng said that aside from biscuits, its new plant may produce cakes under the Suncrest brand. Suncrest Foods Inc., the maker of Suncrest packaged cakes, is an affiliate of Rebisco. Its other affiliates are Multirich Food Corp. (maker of wafers and cream pastes) and Pinnacle Foods Inc. (producer of chips and curls).

Its products under the Rebisco brand include Rebisco Sandwiches, Hansel, Chokies, Bravo, Apple Dapple, King Flakes, Big Time Cracker, Astro Bites and Super Thins. Its candy line covers Bazooka, Judge and Lips.

Rebisco is expanding its brands with its recent acquisition of Storck Products Inc. Philippines, the manufacturer of the "Storck" candy brand under a license from August Storck KG of Germany.

In 1989, Rebisco forayed into the nuts and seeds market through JBC Food Corp., manufacturer of the Dingdong, Captain Sid and Dragon Sid brands. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

GSIS takes bank directors to court

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE Insurance System (GSIS) has filed criminal charges against officials of Equitable-PCI Bank over Roberto Romulo's previous election as independent director of the bank board.

The government pension fund claimed that there was a conflict of interests—to the detriment of the bank's minority shareholders—when Romulo was elected to the board.

GSIS, which has a 12-percent stake in EPCIB, said Romulo could not be elected as independent director given his stint in affiliate companies of the bank. Romulo served as independent director of EPCIB from 2002 to 2004.

Charges were filed against Romulo, Antonio Go, Anthony Conway, Peter Go Pailan, and Nilo Divina.

The complaint was personally filed by Garcia before the Department of Justice on Thursday. Preliminary hearing of the case has been set on June 22.

"As an independent director, Mr. Romulo is mandated by law to exercise his own independent judgment free from the influence of other members of the board and other related interests," Garcia said.

Garcia alleged that Romulo's stint as director of EPCIB only worked in favor of the Go family, the former majority owner of the bank.

Whenever the bank board would decide on an issue, Garcia said, Romulo would always side with the nominee directors of the Go family, especially in matters that concerned the family's continued influence on the bank.

The criminal case filed with the DOF followed the filing of an administrative complaint with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Last week, Romulo's legal counsel issued a statement accusing the GSIS president of forum shopping.

Atty. Reynaldo Geronimo of the Romulo Mabanta law offices issued the statement upon receipt of Garcia's complaint-affidavit filed with the DOJ last Friday.

Geronimo pointed out that Garcia himself admitted in his affidavit that he had filed a similar complaint with the SEC.

But the SEC, in a decision handed down last May, declared that "no criminal sanction should be imposed" on the EPCIB officials whom Garcia had accused.

Upon receipt of that decision, Garcia allegedly filed his complaint with the justice department.

"This is an unembarrassed exhibition of ignorance of the law," said Geronimo. "Garcia should have consulted his legal advisers on what his remedies were when he lost the case at the SEC. Filing the same complaint before another agency, without even the merest editing for facts and tenses, is no remedy."

Geronimo pointed out that Garcia's relentless campaign against Romulo and the others has already exceeded the bounds of reason.

Peso dragged down by tension in Korea

By Doris C. Dumlao

AFTER A BRIEF RESPITE LAST week, the peso yesterday stumbled on a fresh downturn in the region, brought on by military tension in North Korea.

The peso, which has given up the gains seen earlier this year, yesterday shed 17.5 centavos to close at 53.29 from Friday's 53.115 closing against the US dollar at the Philippine Dealing System.

The local currency opened at its intra-day high of 53.22 and hit an intra-day low of 53.38 before recouping some of its losses. Value traded at the Philippine Dealing System thinned to $377 million from $435.5 million on Friday.

"The peso followed the weakening of regional currencies," a currency dealer said. "There's no other reason."

Currency traders said the bearish sentiment in the region—led by the weakening Japanese yen and Korean won—cut short the peso's recovery last week.

The regional currency markets were spooked by reports that North Korea had loaded a long-range ballistic missile, upsetting Asia's wealthiest nation Japan.

Tokyo warned Pyongyang of a harsh response from Japan and the United States if the missile were to be fired.

Traders also said that the market is bracing for renewed political trouble next week when efforts to revive the impeachment of President Macapagal-Arroyo gain ground.

The one-year moratorium against the filing of new impeachment proceedings will end next week.

Adding to the region's woes was the fact that the Chinese yuan surprised the market by weakening, after its central bank announced an increase in the banks' reserve requirement over the weekend.

Given these regional uncertainties, dealers said the peso would likely hover between 53 and P53.50 in the near term.

Collection goals stay, says BIR

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE has not reduced its year-end revenue collection targets and is standing solidly behind Finance Secretary Margarito Teves' bid to attain the government's fiscal targets.

This was the assurance given by Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag to United States-based investment banks JP Morgan and Merrill Lynch amid reports that a modification of the country's investment rating may be in the offing.

Bunag told the investment banks that the prospective revenue collection levels for the current year "have not been revised nor are we seeking any reduction". He explained that the reported review of collection figures "pertains only to an assessment as to which agency should carry the collection burden for certain portions of the collection target".

"But as far as the BIR is concerned, we are sticking to the revenue collection levels that have been previously set for 2006," he underscored.

Bunag also assured the investment banks that the BIR's collection performance "has registered consistent improvement compared to year-ago levels, further boosting the agency's capability to reach the prospective collection level".

He cited the 28.18-percent improvement in the January to April collection performance of BIR regional offices in 2006 over the same period in 2005. The BIR Large Taxpayers Service surpassed its 2005 performance with a 15.04 percent improvement during the first four months of the year.

That's my boil

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THE STATE-OWNED PNCC HAS DECIDED that it should just lose some P5 billion worth of real estate—and much, much more!

Making such a stupendous decision, mind you, was the entire board of the Philippine National Construction Corp., which is only a strategic business in the country, since it only owns the country's two most important toll ways, namely, the North Luzon and the South Luzon expressways.

Malacañang, by the way, appointed the board members. All of them! The chair and CEO of PNCC is none other than business wonder boy Arthur Aguilar.

According to word going around the real estate sector, the PNCC board recently approved a resolution which, in effect, gave away some 20 high-value properties.

They would form part of an "out-of-court" settlement in a case involving an entity called Radstock Securities Limited.

Radstock who? Well, not many in business actually know who the people are behind the company. It seems to have materialized all of a sudden just like a boil.

From what I gathered, Radstock is a corporation registered abroad, most probably in the Bahamas or some suspicious place like it.

And it has been claiming that PNCC owed it something like P18 billion—filing cases over such a fantastic claim all the way to the Supreme Court.

Now, under previous administrations, PNCC has been fighting Radstock tooth and nail.

For PNCC to surrender to Radstock's P18-billion debt claim, it would mean a complete wipe out of PNCC itself.

But suddenly, the PNCC became friendly to Radstock under this cute administration of Gloriaetta.

As I said, the board already agreed to pay off Radstock with those valuable properties.

Not only that, part of the supposed "out-of-court" settlement will be about P1 billion in cash.

And there is more. Radstock is going to get P1 billion from the share of the PNCC in the daily toll collection of the North Luzon and South Luzon expressways.

But just how PNCC got to owe Radstock such an amazing amount, is something for the books.

It seems that, several years ago, the mysterious Radstock bought a debt paper from a Japanese group.

Word has it that the debt paper was actually a $30-million supplier's credit given by the Japanese group to the old CDCP.

When CDCP collapsed, the Japanese group sold the debt paper at a huge discount, and the paper apparently fell in the hands of the unidentified group behind Radstock.

From what I gathered, some influential figures in this cute administration are helping Radstock. A couple of them are well known in the business sector as former public officials.

* * *

In the offing is another attempt to impeach Gloriaetta, and one of the charges is her involvement in a couple of mega deals such as the questionable sale of the SSS holdings in Equitable PCI Bank to the SM group of mall operator Henry Sy.

EPCIB first became famous in the "second envelop" issue in the impeachment of the man named Band … Wrist Band.

That was before the SM group plan became public, with Henry Sy's heir apparent, Tessie Sy, wanting to take over EPCIB for a song, of course with the help of two "godfathers" close to Malacañang.

For one, why did Malacañang allow SSS to sell its holdings in EPCIB to the SM group at a giveaway price of P47 per share, payable after seven years, with even not a single centavo of downpayment?

I mean, just how suspicious was that? And to the public mind, as we all know, suspicion is enough to put a leader down. Look what happened to Wrist Band.

* * *

Joelle Marie Pelaez, the former beauty pageant contestant, actually borrowed P5 million from UCPB and never paid a centavo of the loan.

That was the gist of an internal audit report made by the bank, after Pelaez went to media with claims that her name was used by the bank in a "money laundering" scheme, featuring Wrist Band himself.

The bank found out that Pelaez borrowed P5 million from the bank in February 2000. The loan became "past due" after only six months, or the first amortization period. No payment was ever made on the loan, except the interest for the first five months.

Now, Pelaez's mother Blanquita tried to cover for the beauty contestant by issuing post dated checks as payment for the loan.

All the checks bounced. And so UCPB attached two condo units that were under the name of Pelaez's mother Blanquita.

Only last year, the court held an auction for the condo units, in which UCPB naturally won.

But the bank still could not sell the condo units to recover its loan to Pelaez, because Blanquita executed a deed, giving a LIFETIME usufruct over the units to her parents, Ferman Henzon and Paz Henzon.

Thus UCPB was forced to sell the loan of Pelaez to the government unit PDIC. Actually, it is PDIC that has a claim over those units today.

* * *

What is this I hear that our favorite insurance guy just flew out of town, most probably on a sojourn in Hong Kong, together with a sweet young thing, who could be the second or the third mistress? My, the guy is really living it up!

HOW exercise can improve your golfing /C4

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Snapshots of your life can save other lives

By Linda B. Bolido

KODAK country manager Raymond Albert makes the first can donation to Dr. Christina Santos, president and co-founder of the Philippine Foundation for Breast Care Inc.

HAVE A KODAK MOMENT and help save a life.

Kodak Philippines has partnered with East Avenue Medical Center-based Philippine Foundation for Breast Care, Inc., (PFBCI) in a campaign to promote awareness of breast cancer.

The company has put together the Kodak Life Gallery, a collection of day-in-the-life portraits of some breast-cancer survivors.

It also announced it was placing donation cans in all 600 Kodak Express Stores and other affiliates nationwide. Customers who visit these stores to have their films processed, photos printed or have any other job done can drop loose change into the cans.

Money collected will be used by PFBCI to help defray the cost of diagnosis and management of breast cancer among indigent women.

The cans will feature the portraits of the breast-cancer survivors.

In promoting greater awareness of the deadly disease, Kodak aimed "to give women a better picture of life" and encourage them to seek expert medical attention as early as possible.

Statistics show a 95-percent survival rate if breast cancer is detected at its earliest stage.

World leader

Kodak's special interest in cancer stems from the fact that its healthcare and imaging arm has gained the reputation as the world's leader in health imaging. Among others, it is the main supplier of films for mammography use in hospitals.

Regular mammography, particularly after age 30, has been identified as a major tool in the campaign to arrest breast cancer at its earliest stage.

Kodak also decided to focus on breast cancer because some 70 percent of its customers are women. Though breast cancer can also afflict men, women are the most vulnerable to the disease.

At present, the Philippines reports the highest incidence of breast cancer in Asia. Moreover, most cases in the Philippines are reportedly already in the advanced stages when discovered, resulting in a low survival rate.

During the launch of the campaign, Dr. Cristina Santos, co-founder and president of the non-stock, non-profit foundation and co-founder and consultant-in-charge of East Avenue's Breast Care Center, talked about the current breast cancer situation in the Philippines.

She briefly outlined factors that increased the risk of contracting the disease, as well as the guidelines for early detection of breast cancer.

She said women seeking the assistance of PFBCI would be assessed by a social worker to see if they met the criteria set by the foundation to qualify for help as an indigent.

E-mail the author at lbolido@inquirer.com.ph

Steps for breast self-examination

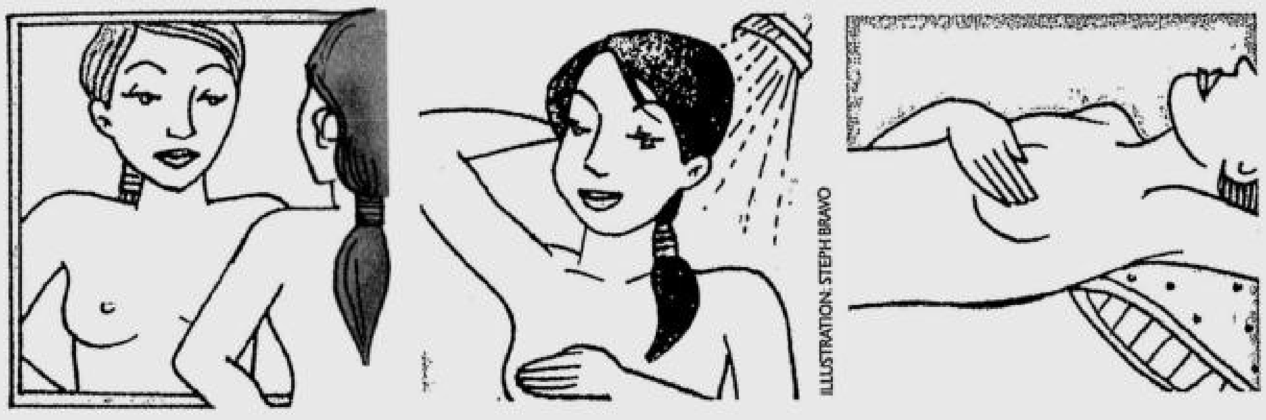


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

1. In front of the mirror. Face the mirror with your arms at your sides and look at your breasts for lumps, dimples or other changes in appearance. Repeat the procedure twice: first, with your arms raised over your head, then with your hands on your hips and your chest muscles tensed. Finally, gently squeeze each nipple and check for discharge.

2. While showering. Put one hand behind your head. Soap your other hand, press it firmly against your breast with your fingers held flat, and make small circle from your nipple outward. In this manner, feel your entire breast and underarm area for lumps. Then raise your other arm and examine your other breast.

3. While lying down. Lie on your back in a comfortable position. Place a pillow under your left shoulder. Examine your left breast with your right hand using the same procedure you used in the shower. Move the pillow under your right shoulder and examine your right breast.

Remember, your breast self-examination is not complete until you have done all three parts of the exam

Laugh, don't cry

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE between compromise and commitment?

It's much like a ham-and-egg sandwich—the chicken is compromised while the pig is committed.

If that didn't make you laugh or at least bring a smile to your face, then maybe it's time you lighten up for your health's sake.

National Artist Vicente Manansala often shared this episode in his life as a struggling artist in Paris. It is a true story, and a charming one at that.

Trying to ease his hunger pangs, he rushed to a café nearest his place of residence.

Unable to speak French, he communicated via his sketches. Every day, he would either draw a fish or a chicken on a piece of paper. This went on for months until the restaurant manager told him one day he no longer had to pay for his meals, as they would be on the house. When he asked why, he was told his drawings fetched a fairly good price in the market.

One wonders why there is a proliferation of timeless Erap jokes and other text messages that parody life situations and human relationships. Is it simply because people just want to have a good laugh?

Laughter therapy

Dr. Lee Berk and fellow researcher Dr. Stanley Tan of Loma Linda University, California, published studies (Humor and Health Journal, September-October 1996) on the effects of laughter on the immune system. Among the benefits of laughter they found were:

- Eustress state—a condition where mirthful laughter produces healthy or positive emotions that influence the immune system, boosting natural killer cells and increasing their number and strength to attack viral infected cells and certain types of cancer and tumor cells.
- Activation of T cells (T lymphocytes). Laughter tells the immune system to activate the T cells or wake them up.
- Strengthening of the fight against upper respiratory tract infection through an increase in the antibody IgA (immunoglobulin A). An antibody fights disease-causing "invaders."
- Increase in gamma interferon that tells the immune system to turn itself on.
- Increase in IgB, another antibody immunoglobulin, as well as an increase in Complement 3, which assists antibodies in penetrating infected cells. The beneficial effects lasted, and levels of antibodies increased, right on the day after patients watched a funny/humorous video.

Stress buster

Studies also registered a general decrease in stress hormones. When stress attacks the body, blood vessels constrict and immune activity is suppressed. But when people are exposed to laughter, these conditions ease.

To illustrate: levels of epinephrine, the hormone that prepares the body for "fright, flight or fight" responses were low even with just the anticipation of humor.

Good workout

Laughter exercises the diaphragm and improves the body's ability to use oxygen. Belly laughter, that hearty, loud expression of humor, is considered one of the best workouts.

Considered much like a pain killer, laughter can reduce pain and help speed up healing. Humor therapy is fast becoming an adjunct to conventional health care and is being looked at closely in pain management.

Paul McGhee, in Humor and Health magazine, said about laughter:

Muscle reluctant, stress reducer, immune system enhancer, pain reducer, cardiac exerciser, blood-pressure regulator, lung cleaner.

Now that you know the benefits of laughter, why would you want to cry?

Beauty regimen

Face yourself in the mirror. Think of the funniest incident in your life. Follow the memory, flow with the feeling.

Affirmation

"Today, I will laugh!"
Love and light!

MEDICard, The Healthcare I Deserve!

Take Charge Doc!

What is prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer is the fourth common cancer in men worldwide and commonly afflicting the elderly. It usually develops as a small nodule on the surface of the prostate, an organ of the male reproductive tract whose function is to release fluid during ejaculation. These nodules can be detected on digital rectal exam (DRE), a process where the doctor feels the prostrate by inserting a finger into the patient's rectum. An elevated prostate specific antigen (PSA) on blood exam may suggests prostate cancer. But a definite diagnosis is made only after biopsy. These tests are important because early prostate cancer rarely causes any sypmtoms. Symptoms brought about by the cancer suggests a more advanced stage. Treatment includes any or a combination of surgical, hormonal or radiotherapy. Current screening recommendation is for men ages 40 and above to have a yearly prostate check-up which includes a digital rectal exam and an optional PSA.

This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our three-year medical service provider from Metro Manila, Dr. Donald Jude Uy Meguizo. Dr. Meguizo specializes in Urology. He graduated from UP College of Medicine in 1996. He later took his residency training for Urologic Surgery at UP-PGH in 2002. He is a member of the Philippine Urological Association and Philippine Medical Association. He is married to Dra. Debbie Gyant Dy Meguizo and blessed with 3 children. MEDICard members may visit him for consultation services at The Medical City, Unit 1509 Medical Arts Tower, Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 10am to 3pm and at M-Tech Medical Hospital, Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10 am to 12noon.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC., 9th floor Sagittarius Building H V dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227
Trunkline: 88-4-9999 Fax No.: 894-5720, 810-3855 Text: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe & Touch Mobile) or 4627 (Smart & Talk N Text) E-mail: inquiry@medicardphils.com Website: www.medicardphils.com

FOR THIS CHILD, THE SCARS WOULD MEAN A LOT. AS HE GROWS OLDER, IT WOULD MEAN HIS WORLD...

A NOTICEABLE SCAR ON THE FACE CAN OFTEN LEAD TO PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS. Scarred people find it hard to accept the fact that they suddenly look different. Their self-confidence is affected. They hide the scar as best as they can. It is even possible for scarred people to become withdrawn and to deliberately avoid contact with others.

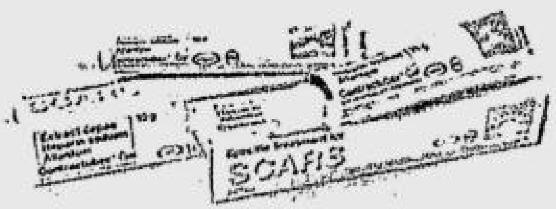
EASE THE EFFECTS OF SCARS WITH CONTRACTUBEX®.

The clinical efficacy of Contractubex® in treating fresh and longer-standing scars and keloids has been documented in numerous studies. In the course of Contractubex® therapy, scar size, color and hardness are reduced and symptoms associated with scars such as itching, feelings of tension and pain, are improved. Gently massage Contractubex® onto the scar tissue 3-4 times daily until complete penetration of the gel.

To know more about scars and Contractubex®, please send us an email at contractubex@organon.ph You may also text us at 09178523350 or call (632) 8177638. Contractubex® is available in leading drugstores nationwide.

Photo of a child after a chemical burn

Photo after Contractubex treatment



Some scars fade away quickly.

Extract cepae	10 g
Heparin sodium	5,000 IU
Allantoin	1 g

Contractubex® Gel
Specific treatment for scars

In other cases, use Contractubex.

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PAL Mabuhay Miles rah-rah team: Kit Javier, Ria Domingo, Barbara Aragon, Peggy Calawod, Krissy Enriquez and Nina Tchoi

PHILIPPINE Airlines hotshots and champs: PAL AVP for products Barbara Aragon, PAL president and COO Jaime Bautista, badminton pro Kennie Asuncion, golfer CJ Suarez and PAL EVP for commercial group Henry So Uy

PAL'S Tina de Vera, Debbie Cuyegkeng and Eileen Galindez

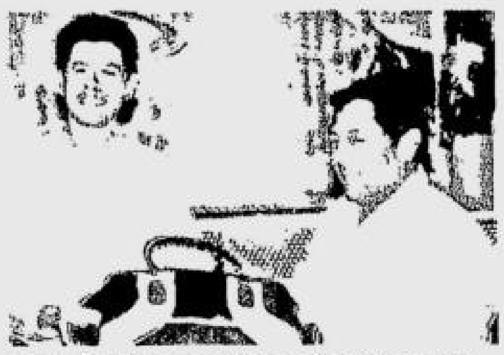
ADREFLEX'S Clang Garcia

EVENT host Anthony Suntay

PAL'S Karina de Leon, Mary Ann Timbol and Mike Dizon

PAL'S Pascual delos Santos and Blanca Abellar

ADREFLEX president and CEO AJ Pangilinan and Felix Cruz



DUNLOP Slazenger's licensing director for the Far East, Stanley The, presents a limited-edition golf bag to PAL president Jaime Bautista.

New miles program brings

THE UNVEILING OF THE FASCINATING new world of Mabuhay Miles' SportsPlus program was witnessed by a roomful of top national athletes at the National Sports Grill in Makati.

Philippine Airlines top executives headed by brilliant president and COO **Jaime Bautista**, no less, got a first glimpse of the sporty, new SportsPlus look, *palanggas*. The eye-catching new card has a dynamic letter design, symbolic of an active and adventurous lifestyle.

Philippine Airlines spitfire AVP-Products **Ma. Barbara Aragon** also announced, "We now have 50-plus more reasons to rave about the exclusive Mabuhay Miles program. SportsPlus has augmented its catalogue, including over 50 partner establishments from specialty sport stores, bowling lanes, dive sites and golf courses. Members can now enjoy amazing discounts and privileges from any of the participating program partners."

The announcement was greeted with loud applause by the approving invitees, dahlings.

The highlight of this fun launch was a tribute to selected national sports heroes. Honored were AMF Bowling World Cup Champion and Athlete of the Year **CJ Suarez**; 2005 SEA Games gold medalist in golf **Juvic Pagunsan**; Australian International Championships gold medalist in badminton **Kennie Asuncion**; and **Kennevic Asuncion**, member of the Philippine Badminton Team that participated in the 13th World championships in Birmingham, England.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

Each athlete was inducted into SportsPlus' elite circle of members.

So check this out, guys and gals. SportsPlus is a Mabuhay Miles program "that allows its members to carry an additional 20 kilos of equipment on a Philippine Airlines and Air Philippines flight for the following sports: cycling, bowling, golf, scuba diving, sportfishing, tennis and badminton," it was explained to *moi* by Mabuhay Miles' cyber smart, eyecatching **Ria Domingo**, *palanggas*.

For more info on SportsPlus, check out www.mabuhaymiles.com.

Breathless

The main man himself, **Bobong Velez**, was left practically breathless *aprés* blowing the candles successively on six birthday cakes presented to him by pals closest to his heart. Each cake represented a decade in his 60 years as an exemplary gentleman, outstanding sport visionary an ty man, *palanggas*.

Held at his trendy Mezze Re Bar in Greenbelt 2, Bobong's 6 bash was a runaway success att awesome nearly a thousand inv

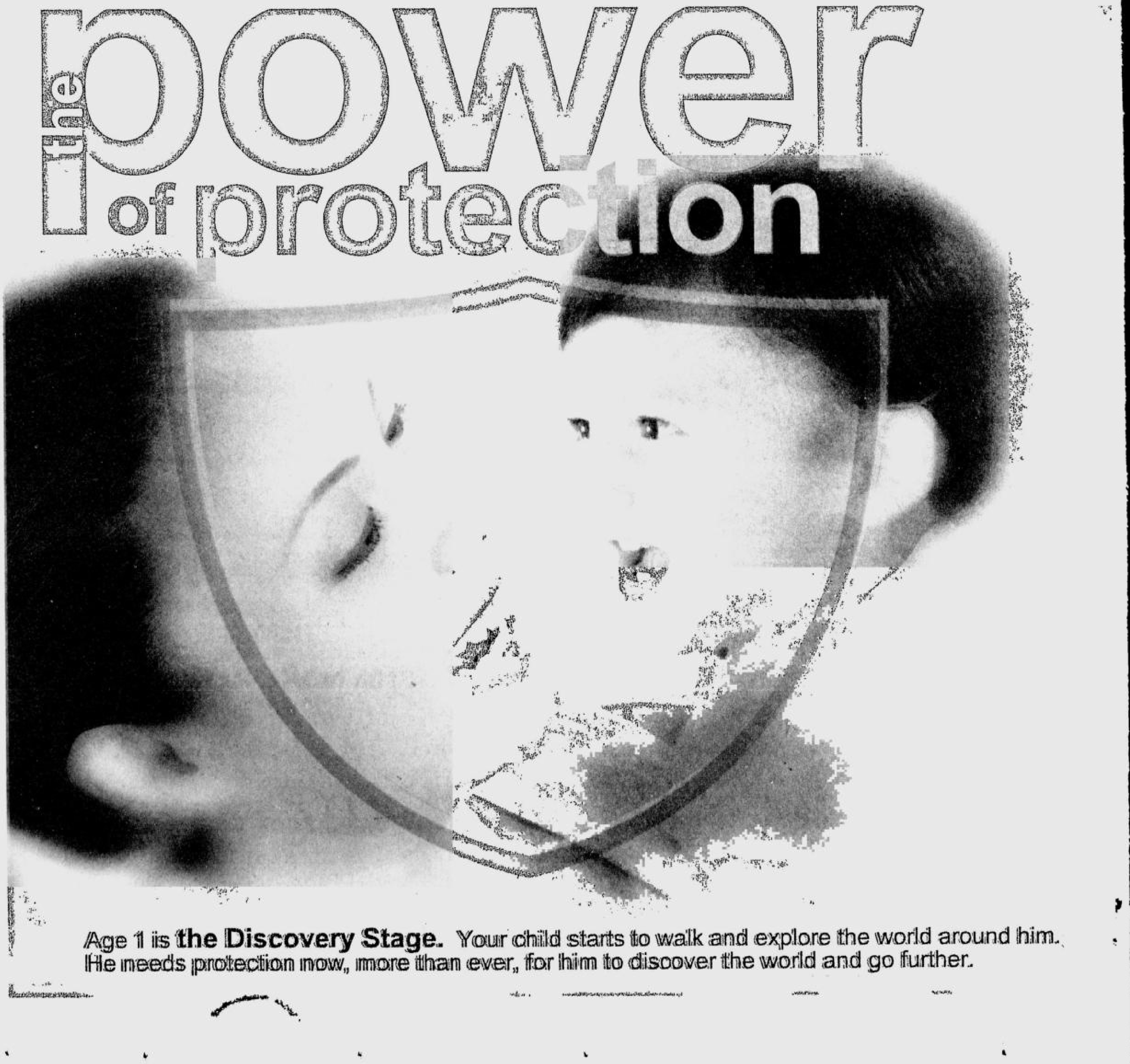
Ricardo Ysmael presented a half of Bobong's grade scho school classmates at La Sall came **Rico Agcaoili**, who did for Bobong's college pals at **Lito Anzures** presented the th the Vintage-PBA years, while tress **Carmi Martin** and **Tweetie de Leon** shared hono the legendary disco that Bobon

Honeyboy and **Dang Pa** banker **Babes Simpao** Bobong's Bible study group cardiologist **Ernie Santos** and per special southern beauty M wrapped it all up by bringing cake, representing Mezze, *nat*

Philippine Tatler publisher **Francisco** led the birthday to by a touching speech that pa Bobong's good heart and gene

The excellent AVP (audio-v tation), directed and concep **Flor Mayo**, drew tons of laug invitees. It featured his pals an revealing little-known facts birthday boy, dahlings.

Mezze's publicist **Donnie R** **Quinito Henson** conducted the



Age 1 is **the Discovery Stage.** Your child starts to walk and explore the world around him. He needs protection now, more than ever, for him to discover the world and go further.

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'S royals, Hans and Olive Sy; celebrator Bobong Velez, Ricky and Beng Dee

smiles to sportsmen

savvy par-

aurant and th birthday nded by an tees.

cake on be- and high Taft. Next the honors he Ateneo. rd cake for tunning ac- upermodel s for Faces, founded.

lanca and epresented nd, finally, obong's su- ricor Nieto n the sixth !

ene Martel t, followed tribute to sity.

ual presen- ualized by s from the associates bout our

mirez and uction of a gorgeous Breitling Aerospace watch donated by **Ivan Yao**, no less, of Lucerne. With a market value of more than P125,000, the watch went to gorgeous **Che Singson**, who had the winning bid of P113,000.

Proceeds of the auction went to the Lead Institute of Sports, a pet advocacy of Bobong, to which the other guests also donated, "in lieu of gifts."

Hey, it was a grand birthday celebration, a fun-fabulous shebang worthy of an extraordinary and quintessential cool party guy.

Cheers, *palangga*!

Malang celebrates

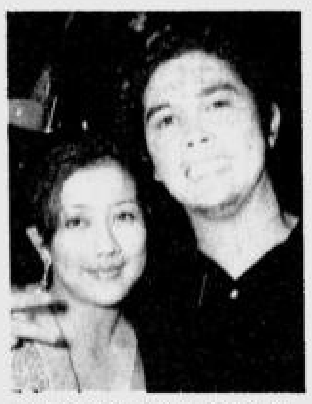
Those fashionable, civic-minded and charity-oriented Santos sisters—**Nene Santos Leonor**, **Fe Rodriguez** and **Letty Bonoan**—invited their close pals on behalf of their beloved uncle, the renowned artist **Mauro Malang Santos**, no less, *palanggas*, at the stable of the horsy set, the posh Manila Polo Club. The occasion was Malang's 78th birthday.

During lunch, the chitchat was paintings, *natch*! The bunch dug into the superb Italian food excellently prepared by **Lyn Sunico's** Makati Skyline.

Après the calorific desserts, it was time to blow out the candle on the cake marking another chapter in the honoree's 78 blessed years, *palanggas*.

(seated) **LETTY** Bonoan, celebrator Mauro Malang Santos, Nene Leonor and Fe Rodriguez; Bong Santos, Ces Rodriguez, Tina Bonoan, Olga Santos, Chit Salud, Ethel Timbol, Thelma Gana and Tony Bonoan

DIGNA Arce and Timmy Nepomuceno



BROTHER-AND-SISTER act: Cris Lopez Nieto and Marco Nieto

DOMINI Primero and Joanne Quintas-Primero

TOP achiever Anna Periquet

FR. JOEY Tuazon, Mike Toledo, Quinito Henson, Fr. Armand Tangi, Jun Bernardino and Donnie Ramirez (seated)

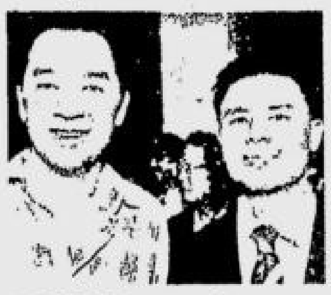
SOUTHERN pals Bibing Villanueva, Girl Villareal and Maricor Nieto

CHIQUI Roa-Puno, Leo Valdez, PBA commissioner Noli Eala, Irene Eala and Chot Reyes

BOONE Ongchoco, Robert Young and Manolet Lagdameo

BAMBINA de Ocampo, Lorraine Schuck, Ramon Monzon and Peachy Veneracion

REP. Charlie Cojuangco and Denise Lacson



BANJO Velasco and Shopwise's Donnie Tantoco

Nestlé

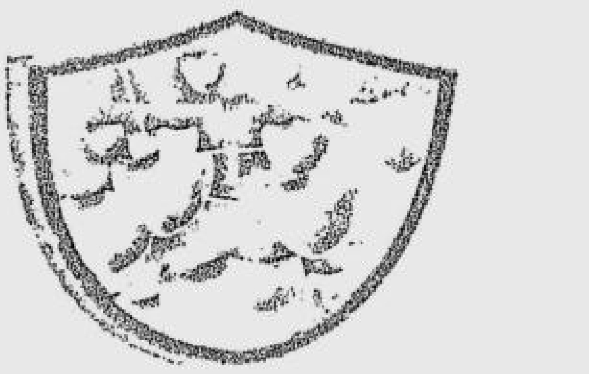
Introducing new NIDO 1+
with Lactobacillus PROTECTUS™
the latest innovation in milk nutrition

The 3-Point Revolution

Lactobacillus PROTECTUS

1 The Only Milk With Live Lactobacillus PROTECTUS™

NIDO 1+ is the first to introduce Lactobacillus PROTECTUS™ in a milk powder. It is a live microorganism that helps build your child's body defenses.



2 How It Works

Once NIDO 1+ is mixed with water, the Lactobacillus PROTECTUS™ multiplies by the millions and when consumed start to boost your child's immune system.

3 Active Protection And More!

NIDO 1+ also has Prebio[1] – a unique blend of natural fiber – and essential vitamins and minerals that further strengthen his immune system. Plus DHA for visual and mental development.

Continuous Drinking = Continuous Protection

The Nestlé Research Center

This milk innovation was scientifically developed by the Nestlé Research Center in Switzerland, a pioneer in nutrition research. The Nestlé Research Center's scientists, doctors and nutritionists work constantly to improve nutritional standards the world over.

Protecting the world's No.1 child

The NIDO Nutrition System

Nestlé
NIDO
1+
Active Protection
Nestlé
NIDO
3+

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Brush, brush, brush your teeth

By Anne A. Jambora

DID YOU KNOW THAT SOME Filipino families share toothbrushes? That some school-aged children have no clue what dentists do? And that some middle-aged adults have never been to a dentist?

Dr. Angelita B. Galban, chair of the Department of Community Dentistry at the University of the Philippines Manila College of Dentistry, compiled these alarming facts on the Filipinos' understanding of dental hygiene and their oral care practices in a study that was presented by leading toothbrush brand Oral-B at the recent Philippine Dental Association's convention.

Dr. Salinda Marcel, dentist and professor at UP, said oral hygiene was one of the most commonly neglected health concerns among Filipino families.

These findings are based on community studies on situational analysis of adopted barangays and urban localities, which have been conducted by UP Manila since 2000. There are about 50-60 respondents per barangay.

Included among the mistaken oral health beliefs of Filipinos are: toothbrushes do not need to be replaced; milk teeth need no brushing since these will be replaced by permanent teeth; permanent teeth need no extra care since dentures will replace them anyway; it's normal to wear dentures in old age; dentures do not require any cleaning at all; and teeth brushing cannot be done without toothpaste.

Also cited at the conference was a 2002 survey which revealed that the average patient at the UP Manila College of Dentistry alone had at least 15 decayed, filled or missing teeth by adulthood, falling way below the World Health Organization standard of just two for acceptable oral health hygiene. An even more distressing figure is that 54 percent just leave their teeth to decay.

These findings hardly merit smiles, of course. Fortunately, Galban also said various dental health programs and oral care awareness projects have since been launched by UP Manila.

To help promote the importance of good oral hygiene for overall health, Oral-B Phils. launched last year its "Aahmbush!" program and toured it across the country, complete with free dental checkups by partner dental experts, and free toothbrushes to promote brushing.

Marcel pointed out tribes that used twigs to clean their teeth, and how their set of pearly whites remained healthy despite relying solely on this practice. While not exactly dismissing the role of toothpastes, as they do contain chemicals that aid in oral health care, she said it was ultimately the toothbrush that cleaned the teeth.

"The toothbrush is the mechanical tool we use to clean our teeth. It is important to choose it wisely. A primary consideration should be the bristles," Marcel said. Bristles must be soft so as not to damage the gums, yet scientifically designed to effectively scrub-clean the teeth, she added.

A 2006 Dentists Equity Study by AC Nielsen shows that 89 percent of the dentists use and recommend Oral-B toothbrush. That is up from the 2003 usage rate at 81 percent. Bristles are the primary consideration for the choice next to cleaning efficiency, comfort and safety.

DR. SALINDA Marcel: "Brush your teeth for at least two minutes. This gives enough time for the fluoride to diffuse and work its way into your teeth the way it should." JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

"We take great pride in introducing clinically superior oral care products that improve the oral health of Filipinos," said Ming Arroyo, senior product manager of Oral-B.

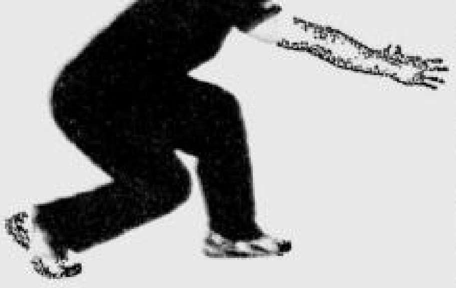
Oral-B Stages, for instance, is specifically tailored to the different stages of a child's development, from a month old all the way to 8 years old and above. Adults have a wide range of choices as well, from bristles that massage the gums to those that lift and sweep away plaques.

"Don't forget to floss," Marcel added.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Staggered reaching squat



STRENGTHENS the legs, buttocks and core muscles

Equipment:

None

Exercise technique:

1. Stand in a staggered stance with one leg in front of the other.
2. Squat by taking your buttocks backward and arms forward as if reaching into a low shelf.
3. Straighten up to starting position.

Performance tips:

1. Keep spine neutral—neither arching nor rounding.
2. Avoid bringing knees past your toes.

Repetitions:

Ten to 15 repetitions.

Are you fit enough to tee off?

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

GOLFERS SPEND A LOT OF money on equipment and private lessons just to improve their score. However, according to Gregory Florez of First Fitness, golfers tend to neglect their most important asset—their bodies. Golf fitness expert Neil Chasan says a golfer should regard his body as the 15th club in the golf bag.

While golf is not a physically demanding sport like soccer or basketball, it still places tremendous strain on the elbows, shoulders, spine and knees.

Being fit will not guarantee a 100-percent improvement in your handicap or completely protect you from injuries, but it will help you play better golf and reduce your risk of injury.

Endurance

According to Wayne Wescott, research fitness director of the YMCA, "Golf is far from a huffing and puffing activity so cardiovascular conditioning has little practical application for improving golf performance."

However, he points out that aerobic exercise can be "beneficial with respect to heart health and may help reduce fatigue during the last hour of play." Stamina during the last couple of holes of the last day of an important tournament may make all the difference between winning and losing.

Flexible strength

Westcott says that in 1995, only two professional players were lifting weights. By 2000, almost every pro player was pumping iron. The inspiration for this change in attitude was Tiger Woods who, according to StrengthFit.com, put on 20 pounds of muscle in one year of weight-lifting and used those added pounds to make par-5s obsolete.

Credit for the attitude shift toward strength-training should also go to Westcott's landmark study conducted with amateur and professional golfers. The eight-week study used two protocols: strength-training alone (STA) and strength-training plus flexibility (STF).

His research team discovered that the STA group improved clubhead speed by three miles per hour without adversely affecting flexibility. It also produced a six-percent improvement in resting blood pressure.

The STF group achieved an increase in clubhead speed of five miles per hour. They also increased hip and shoulder flexibility by 24 percent.

The golfers involved reported "longer drives, lower scores, less fatigue and no injuries during the following golf season."

Golf research

The Centinela Hospital biomechanics laboratory started to research the golf swing in 1983 after noticing that they were treating a large number of golf-related injuries. The lab has since published many papers on the subject. Here is what their research has found:

> 'A golfer should regard his body as the 15th club in his golf bag'

Contrary to the popular opinion that it is the left side of the body that is mainly responsible for the power in the golf swing, the muscular output of the left and right side of the body is equal. Therefore, training exercises of any kind (strength, flexibility or golf drills) should be balanced.

The move toward the ball occurs first at the hips and is followed by the arms. Power is generated in the legs as they push into the ground and the energy created travels up the body. The trunk and arms are not responsible for power in the swing. Instead, they are used to transfer the power from the legs, buttocks and hips out to the club.

The largest physical difference between highly skilled players and less-skilled players is the amount of trunk rotation. Poor trunk rotation and flexibility produces a shorter arc within which the club can gather speed.

In order to get the clubhead to high speed within a shorter arc, the less flexible player has to "muscle" the club or use more of his arm muscles to get the ball to fly a longer distance. This leads to early fatigue, poor golf skills and increased chance of injury.

The scapular (muscles that attach to the shoulder blades) and rotator cuff (four small muscles that surround the shoulder joint like a cuff) are crucial in the swing but they are weak in most people. They are among the most easily injured muscles in golfers.

The muscular patterns used by men and women are the same. There is no need for different exercise programs for male and female golfers.

Ideal golf fitness program

The ideal program would include aerobic exercise, strength training, flexibility exercises, and core exercises that improve rotation, balance and coordination.

Twenty minutes of aerobic exercise is enough to improve stamina and heart health unless weight loss is also desired (40-60 minutes would be more appropriate).

The focus of the strength training exercises is to get stronger muscles without making them significantly bigger. Flexibility training should include "dynamic" flexibility exercises that are done while moving.

Yoga, Pilates and stability ball training are excellent core conditioning programs to achieve flexible strength and rotation.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

What is seen may not be reality

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

THERE ARE TWO WAYS OF looking at things.

One way is to look at things purely from our external senses, i.e. what we can see, hear, smell, touch and taste. This is the way of western orthodox physical sciences.

Another way is to see things from our mind's eye, or from our inner sight or from a soul level. This is the way of the mystic, the psychic and the clairvoyant.

Reality therefore can be looked at from an "ordinary" standpoint and from a "clairvoyant" standpoint, terms used by neuroscientist Dr. Lawrence Le Shan in his books, "A Separate Reality" and the "The Medium, The Mystic and the Physicist."

Looking at things from a purely sensory and external point of view has worked well for humankind. The scientific method has given us much progress and a certain degree of control over nature. Yet there's the nagging question that there are more to things than what we can see with our limited five senses.

Entering the world of clairvoyant reality is like Alice entering Wonderland. Everything is not what it seems to be. And who is to tell what is correct and what is not?

Only in part

Unfortunately, we cannot really be certain of things, can we? We always see things only in part and rarely wholly. And to make final judgment or conclusion based on inadequate perception is bound to lead to error.

This realization or line of thinking reminds me of two quotations. One is from philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, who said, "There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what is not so, and the other is to refuse to believe what is so."

The second quotation comes from the Chinese Taoist philosopher Chuang Tse or Chuangchu. He said, "One night I dreamt I was a butterfly. As a butterfly I was happy flying from flower to flower. I was sure I was a butterfly. But when I woke up, I realized that I was not a butterfly but Chuang Tse, the philosopher, dreaming he was a butterfly. But wait, I began to think, 'What if I were really a butterfly dreaming that I am Chuang Tse?'"

What is reality? Is there such a thing as objective reality? Buddhists say there's no such thing, that everything is really *maya* or illusion.

We can never really know the true nature of reality. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant said the same thing. "We can only know what is in our mind, the phenomena, but never what is outside of it, the noumena."

And Plato, much earlier in the history of philosophy, said something similar. "We can never have perfect knowledge of things outside our minds. We can only have imperfect pictures of them." Objective reality is unknowable, according to him. What we see are only shadows of reality, not reality itself.

And so forth and so on, ad nauseam.

No end

I have no intention of adding to the debate. There can never be any end to it. The only thing I want to point out is there is another way of looking at things around us that will add greater meaning to our lives.

For example, understanding the hidden laws of nature enables us to see why things happen the way they do. Knowing about the *akashic* record makes us realize that everything we experience gets recorded in time and space and can eventually be accessed by someone with clairvoyant vision.

Perhaps this is what Christ meant when he said "what is hidden will be revealed." There are no secrets in the universe. To one with clairvoyant vision, everything is crystal clear, even our thoughts and deepest secrets.

It is gratifying to note that more and more scientists are beginning to appreciate the hidden dimensions or levels in physical reality and the role that consciousness plays in our perception of that reality.

Quantum physicists, for example, have discovered that our thoughts really affect matter. This becomes very clear and demonstrable on the quantum level, that is on the subatomic levels of matter.

At that level, the classical laws of Newtonian physics no longer apply. What apply are the laws of consciousness or human thoughts. The Buddhists are right when they tell us this world is largely our own mental creation. What is out there is *maya* or illusion.

Note: I will be in Cagayan de Oro City July 22-23 to conduct my two-day seminar on Inner Mind Development. Call 0917-7120253.

Tips on eye care for contact lens wearers

THAT PAINFUL, BLURRY feeling when you wear your contact lenses may be caused by more than just dryness of the eyes. It could be a nasty fungal infection called Fusarium keratitis.

Fusarium is a fungus that thrives in tropical climates, while keratitis means inflammation of the cornea (that's the transparent layer covering your eyeball). Symptoms of Fusarium keratitis include redness, pain, tearing, increased light sensitivity, blurry vision, discharge and swelling. Left untreated, Fusarium keratitis can lead to permanent scarring and blindness, so go to your doctor immediately when you experience any of these symptoms.

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COMPLETE Multi-purpose Solution

Dr. David Hansen, Director of Professional Services for Advanced Medical Optics, Inc., manufacturer of ophtalmic surgical and eye-care products, gives the following tips to protect your eyes from infection:

- Wash hands with lanolin-free soap and water, and dry (lint-free method) before handling lenses.
- Wear and replace lenses according to the schedule prescribed by the eye care practitioner.
- Follow the specific lens cleaning and storage guidelines from the eye care practitioner and the solution manufacturer.
- Keep the contact lens case clean and replace every 1-3 months.
- Remove the lenses and consult your eye care practitioner immediately if you experience symptoms such as redness, pain, tearing, increased light sensitivity, blurry vision, discharge or swelling.

The correct choice of lens care solution is also crucial for optimal eye health and a safe, comfortable contact lens wearing experience.

For nearly 15 years, AMO has been providing contact lens users worldwide with Complete Multi-purpose Solutions, trusted for daily lens cleaning and disinfection. Exclusively distributed by New Trends International, Complete is available at leading opthalmic shops nationwide.